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1102 Mortality of the Soul

WILLIAM BROWN

THE

# IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL,

RELIGIOUSLY AND PHILOSOPHICALLY CONSIDERED.

A SERIES OF LECTURES.

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BY ROBERT COOPER,

AUTHOR OF "THE HOLY SCRIPTURES ANALYZED," "LECTURES ON THE BIBLE," ETC.

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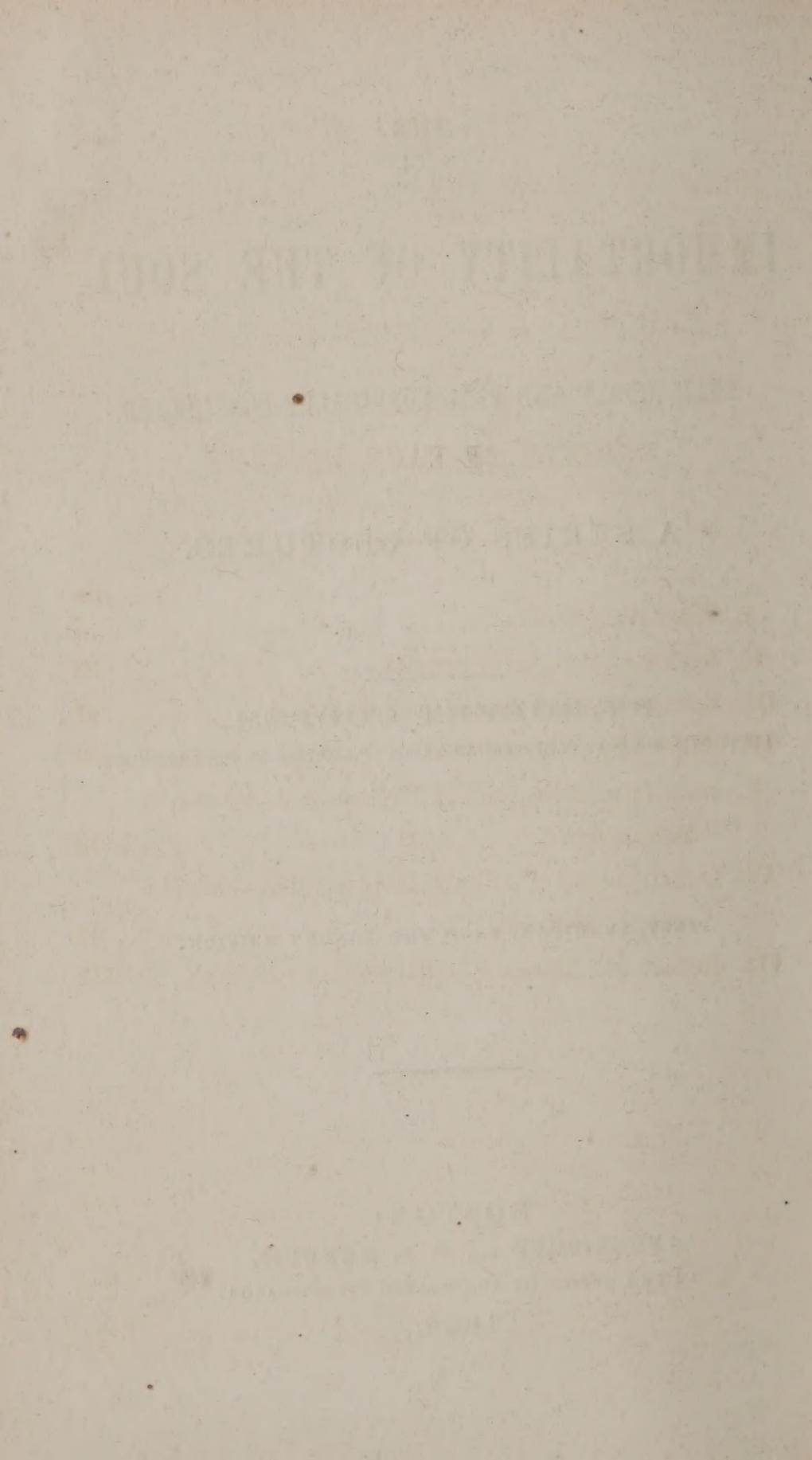
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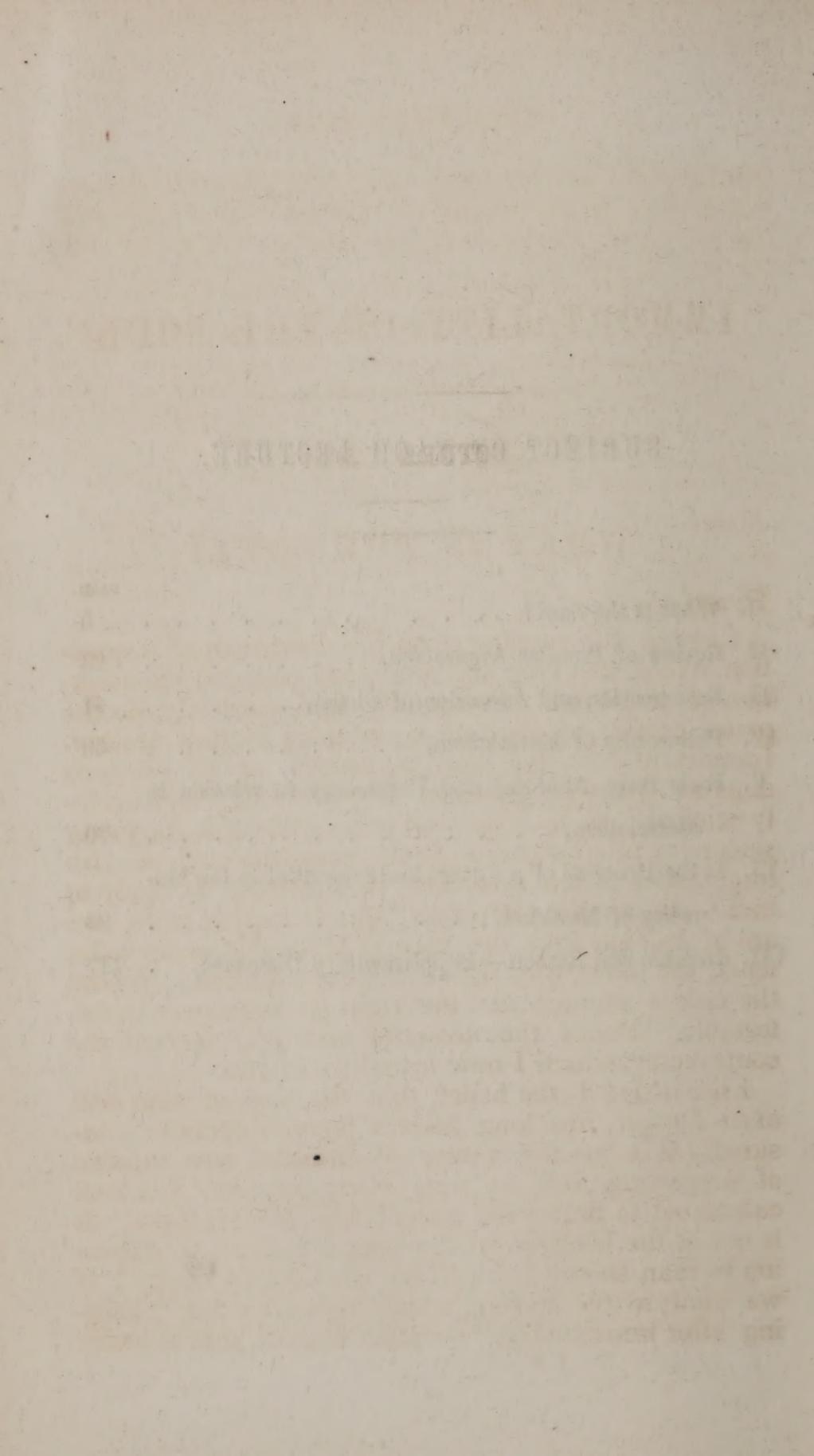
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# IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

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## LECTURE FIRST.

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### WHAT IS THE SOUL?

FRIENDS—

I ENTER this evening upon the discussion of a question which has long and anxiously engaged the attention of mankind. Profoundly and earnestly do the pious profess to cogitate upon their eternal destiny. Immortality of the soul is, indeed, of all religious dogmas the most popular. Profane and “desperately wicked” is he esteemed who presumes, however sincerely, to entertain a doubt upon the subject. No imputation is too scurrilous or revolting to apply to him. Reversing, however, the Orthodox rule, we are of opinion that the more fashionable or sacred a tenet, the more imperative the examination. Where the risk is momentous, the right to inquire is incontestable. Hence the *necessity* and *propriety* of the controversy which I now introduce to you.

I have stated the belief, that the soul of man will exist forever, has long been a popular opinion. Assuredly it is one the vanity of mankind was capable of suggesting, and we may fairly presume it is well calculated to flatter the parent who gave it birth. It is not in the least surprising that a doctrine so flattering to man should have found so many followers. If we analyse the feeling which generates this “longing after immortality,” we shall discern that it arises

*mainly* from the pride and vanity of the human race. Pope has well described the real origin of this Orthodox sentiment when he declared that—

“ Hell was built on *s spite*, and heaven on *pride*.”

Moore, too, sarcastically observes—

“ A heaven, too, ye must have, ye lords of dust—  
A splendid paradise poor souls, ye must :  
That prophet ill sustains his holy call  
Who finds not heavens to suit the tastes of all.  
Vain things ! as lust or *vanity* inspires,  
The heaven of each is but what each desires.

There could be no stronger proof that this much-admired doctrine is principally founded upon the weakness of our kind than the fact, that those various races who have held any opinion upon the subject, have formed their heavens, like their gods, agreeably to their own characters and wishes. The American Indian calculates upon finding successful chases after wild animals, verdant plains, and no winter, as the characteristics of his “ future life.” The African hopes for the accomplishment of those desires about home, friends, and plenty of food, in which he suffers deprivation here. The Asiatic thinks of nothing but the enjoyment of the most beautiful women as his future lot in eternity. Our Europeans are deluded with all sorts of wild metaphysical notions, each forming his Eldorado in his own peculiar way, according to his education and circumstances. I read some time ago of a clergyman who was depicting, in the most glowing terms, the happiness of heaven. He said he could compare it to nothing but the blessings of matrimony ! and actually quoted as illustrative of his theme the lines,

“ ‘Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,  
Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home !”

The red Indian, when told by one of our missionaries that in the “ promised land ” they would neither eat, drink, hunt, nor marry a wife, contemptuously

replied, that instead of wishing to go there, he should deem his residence in such a place as the greatest possible calamity. Many not only rejected such a destiny for themselves, but were indignant at the attempt to decoy their children into such a comfortless region!

In entering upon the argument, the first question which suggests itself is—*What is the soul?* To this query very curious and contradictory replies have been given. Diogenes declared the soul to be composed of *air*. Democritus, of *fire*. Hippocrates, of *fire and water*. Thales defined the soul to be a “substance, having within itself the power to move itself.” Pythagoras, and especially Plato—the leaders of the *immaterial* school—held that the soul was incorporeal—a being capable of subsisting without a body; and that the souls of all animals were of the portions soul of the world. Aristotle explains it to be that which enables us to live, perceive, and move. Socrates taught that the soul was pre-existent to the body, and endowed with eternal ideas—that the souls of the good, after death, are in a happy state, and those of the wicked suffer endless punishment.

The pious of our own era, however, repudiate the *dicta* of these ancient sages. They declare they have nothing to do with the crude and incongruous notions of “Heathen barbarians.” We are *Christians*—civilized—favored with the blessed light of the Gospel, &c. Well, and pray do you know more of the soul than these “barbarians?” If I ask you what the soul is, you tell me it is a “*spirit*.” If I inquire what a spirit is, you tell me it is the “*soul*.” Your definition is quite Johnsonian. To explain one enigma you employ another. To “enlighten” me, you lead me into the midst of darkness. If this be the “*light*” of the Gospel, I have yet to learn of its superiority over heathenism. A savage, if he has heard anything at all of the soul, could only give the same answer. But the “barbarian” does attach *some* idea to the term spirit. When he speaks of a spirit he means an agent like the

air, the breeze, the breath, that invisibly produces discernible or tangible effects. Ask the modern Christian, and all he can say is, that it is an "immaterial *substance*," perfectly simple, having no extension, no parts—in short, nothing in common with matter. Now what does this mean? Simply, that the soul is a "substance," and yet has nothing in common with substances! In other words, it is a substance, and still is composed of nothing that could make it a substance! Wonderful philosophy, truly! "*Spiritual substance*," indeed. What a solecism! This is only adding mystery to mystery—absurdity to absurdity—paradox to paradox. I am afraid it is like much of our modern theology—"too *heavenly* to be understood." *Spiritual substance*! I cannot forget a definition so exquisitely learned. Unfortunately for the Orthodox, there cannot be a *Spiritual substance*. It is a contradiction and an impossibility. If it be a substance it cannot be a spirit, or *vice versa*. Spirit and substance, I hold involve two opposite principles. They cannot, therefore, be the same, nor can they be amalgamated. Substance means an *entity*. Its opposite, spirit, must, as a consequence, imply *nonentity*. To talk of a "*spiritual substance*" is just as inconsistent and paradoxical as to speak of *something nothing*, or *nothing something*. It is certainly not astonishing that our divines should experience such consummate difficulty in giving an idea of the soul, for if it be a "spirit," and spirit, being the opposite of substance, is a mere negation, spirit must imply *the absence of an idea*! Man cannot form a conception of a nonentity. Spirituality, therefore, I repeat, is the mere negation of ideas, which is only saying, in plain words, *it has no existence*. Why then dream of it living "forever," when it never *did* "live?" Spirit is only a more convenient word for nothing. When the immaterialist is called upon to show a sample of his favorite commodity he is compelled to borrow the materialist's terms and ideas, and employ the expression—"spiritual sub-

*stance.*" The *spiritualist*, in fact, is obliged to admit *materialism* before he can explain his meaning. He thus refutes himself at the very threshold of the argument. Certain we are that if the soul be a "substance" at all, in *any* form, it must have properties, and possessing properties it is matter and not spirit. The spirituality of his definition, therefore, is at once exploded. To attempt to elucidate spirit by adding matter to it, is, I maintain, virtually giving up spiritualism, and making the explanation more unintelligible and contradictory than the thing explained.

We know we have five infallible witnesses in favor of the existence of *matter*—viz., seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. But where is the proof of anything *spiritual*?—where the "sense" to impart a consciousness of *its* vitality? When the theologian finds himself thus driven into a corner, and obliged to rest his argument on an absurdity, he turns round, and, with the most amiable modesty, announces that "all these things are mysteries." Now this only means he knows nothing about it. Why, then, should he presume to decide about a thing of which he is unable to form the least impression, and damn everybody else who will not be guilty of the same inconsistency and presumption?

If, however, the soul be something *essentially* different to the body—the opposite to that of matter—how can these two influences, which have no relation or affinity to each other, combine to produce either mental or physical phenomena? How can that which is a substance co-operate with that which is a spirit? How can materiality act upon immateriality, or the reverse? My friends, can it really be true, or is it compatible with reason and philosophy, that man is competent to figure to himself a being not material, having neither extent nor parts, which, nevertheless, acts on matter without having any point of contact? Is it possible to conceive for a moment of the union of the corporeal with the incorporeal—to comprehend how

this material body can bind, enclose, constrain, determine a fugitive, immaterial being like the soul that escapes all our senses? Dr. Priestly, the Unitarian philosopher, admirably observes:—"It is considered that spirit and body can have no common properties; and when it is asked, how can they act upon one another, and how can they be so intimately connected as to be continually and necessarily subject to each other's influence, it is acknowledged to be a difficulty which we cannot comprehend. *But had this question been considered with due attention, what has been called a difficulty would have been deemed an IMPOSSIBILITY.* It is impossible to conceive *mutual* action without some common property, by means of which the things that act and re-act upon each other may have some connection. A substance that is hard may act upon and be acted upon by another hard substance, or even one that is soft; but it is certainly *impossible* that it should affect, or be affected by, a substance, that *can make no resistance at all.*"

Let me ask, if the soul be a distinct entity from the body, *in what portion of the human frame it resides?* Somewhere it must be located. One writer supposed it is placed in the great toe, to point out the way in which the body should move. I would advise no one, therefore, to submit to amputation—at least of *that* organ. Others conceive that the soul is interwoven with every nerve, vein, and artery in the system. Some portion of the immortal principle, therefore, would be lost when the body was mutilated. Is it located in the brain? Surely not, or it would correct the judgment of the insane, unless *it* likewise became infected with insanity; and if it be at all liable to disease, it is an axiom in physiology that it must be liable to *death*, and consequently its immortality is impugned. Then where is it? Can our erudite priesthood answer? Not they. Though they profess to know so much about it, and to prize it so highly, they cannot inform us where it is to be found!

But another question presents itself—*when does the soul enter the body?* When does it form part of the human economy? When, in short, does man begin to be immortal? At conception, during gestation, at birth, or when? If the soul be immaterial and the body material, I hold that neither the generation nor the destruction of the body can have any effect with respect to it. This foreign principle must have been united either at the time of conception or at birth, and either have been created at the time of such union, or have existed in a separate form *prior* to that union. Must a divine power be employed to produce a soul when the human species unite, or some of the pre-existent spirits be obliged, immediately upon that event, to descend from the superior regions to inhabit the new formed embryo? Sir E. Home, with the assistance of the microscope, has seen a human being eight days old only from the time of conception. He satisfied himself the brain was distinguishable. Could the immaterial soul have been connected with it at this early period, or was the tenement too small even for so ethereal a lodger? We are left in profound darkness, indeed, upon the most critical fact connected with the subject—the precise time when man becomes an immortal being. An able physiologist well observes—“Let us view man when within the shell, and when out of it. Let us take a microscope and examine the youngest embryos—those of the growth of four, six, eight, or fifteen days. After this age, we can discover them with the naked eye. Before this time we can see little more than a pulp of marrow, which is the *brain*, where the original of the nerves is first formed, where the principle of feeling is first seated, and the heart begins to beat. We first observe the head by degrees stretch forth the neck, which, being widened, first forms the thorax, etc. The belly is formed next, which is divided into two parts by a partition, called the diaphragm. These parts, being expanded, furnish the arms, hands, fingers, nails, hair, etc. The other

gives the thighs, legs, feet, etc., which forms the support and balance of the body." Such is the formation of man. Not a word is said here of the formation of the "soul." Physiology knows nothing of it. The whole economy of man can be explained without it. Of what use, then, is it to humanity? However, if we concede, for the sake of argument, that the soul exists, either it comes into life *with* the body or *before* it. If the former, it inevitably follows it cannot live forever, inasmuch as it is a fundamental law in philosophy that nothing can exist *to* eternity but what has existed *from* eternity, or we should be forced to admit the contradiction that immortality sprung from mortality—an idea no less paradoxical than that the infinite should emanate from the finite. On the other hand, supposing the soul to have been extant *prior* to the body, it must either have flourished during that period in a perfectly *mature* state, or, on its union with the body, became developed as the body became developed. Accepting the former alternative—that it had existed in a perfectly mature state—we are led to the absurdity that the soul of a person when only a minute old is exactly the same—as effective and mature—as when he has reached seventy years! What is the use, then, of living such a length of time? Why not cease our earthly mission at once, and proceed direct to our celestial abode? But if the soul is developed, as the body is developed—infantile when the body is infantile—mature when the body is mature—decrepid when the body is decrepid—we are bound to infer that it will *perish* when the body perishes. I defy the theologian to surmount these difficulties. If it be subject to physical laws for its development, it must be amenable to physical conditions at its dissolution.

*Where, however, does the soul come from?* From God, answer the orthodox. May I ask how *He* produced it? In a simple, though perhaps not in a very polite way, if we are to believe Moses. He took hold of Adam in this polite manner. The passage in Gen-

esis, chap. ii., v. 3, runs:—"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Now, allowing this to be a true account of the origin of the "soul," it is manifest it must be *material*. *Breath* is matter in a rarified state. The soul composed of such elements is as much a substance as the steam which issues from a boiler, though not always as perceptible. On a strict examination it will be found, that this famous passage has not the slightest reference to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The term "soul," as here used, means only *life*.

But, say some theologians in great triumph, life is the soul. Is it? Then surely we have extorted the right definition at last. First we are told the "soul" is a "spirit," "immaterial, indivisible," etc., and now we are assured it simply means "life," the "vital principle." Let us test this postulate. In the first instance, it obviously follows that *everything* that has life must be immortal. Every dog, rat, fly, flea, etc., is in possession of a soul, and with ourselves endowed with that "ardent hope," that "fond desire," this "longing after immortality!" This is a "levelling" doctrine with a vengeance! Moreover, life is an essential property of organized matter, and subject to the great principle of the physical world—change; and thus, in process of time, immediate or remote, the soul necessarily loses all identity or personality. How would it be possible, therefore, for it to be everlasting? The argument that life is the soul not only proves too much, by giving that attribute to brutes as well as to man, but actually demonstrates the fallacy of the very doctrine it is intended to support. Triumphant has this been shown by those distinguished physiologists, Sir Charles Morgan, Professor Lawrence, Dr. Elliotson, and Dr. Southwood Smith. They scatter to the winds the vulgar idea of the priesthood that life is the soul, and exists independently of matter. Sir Charles, in his "Philosophy of Life," expresses himself as fol-

lows.—For the performance of vital movements, the parts in which they take place have a definite construction peculiar to each. These several arrangements are called *organs*, and the movements they affect are technically termed their *functions*. Thus digestion is the function of the stomach, and the secretion of bile that of the liver. *The sum total of functions* which any individual can perform constitutes its *life*.” He again observes:—“Life is known exclusively by function—function implies movement, movement *change*, and change *DISSOLUTION*.” According to this able physiologist, if soul be life, and life is known only by function—function implying movement, movement change, and change dissolution—the *soul* must be subject to dissolution, and therefore cannot be immortal. Prof. Lawrence, one of the boldest and ablest writers in our literature, fearlessly affirms, in his “*Lectures on Man*,” that “Life, using the word in its popular and general sense, which at the same time is the only rational and intelligible one, is merely the active state of the animal structure. It includes the notions of sensation, motion, and those ordinary attributes of living beings which are obvious to common observation. It denotes what is apparent to our senses, and cannot be applied to the offspring of metaphysical subtlety or *immaterial abstractions* without a complete departure from its original acceptation—without obscuring and confusing what is otherwise clear and intelligible. To talk of life as independent of an animal body—to speak of a function without reference to an appropriate organ—is physiologically absurd.” He sums up as follows:—“That life, then, or the assemblage of functions, is immediately *dependent* upon organization, appears to me, physiologically speaking, as clear as that the presence of the sun above the horizon causes the light of day; and to suppose that we could have light without that luminary, would not be more unreasonable *than to conceive that life is independent of the animal body*.” Reasoning more conclusive in

refutation of the doctrine of immortality could not be adduced. Dr. Elliotson, in his "Human Physiology," demonstrates, in the most beautiful and elegant terms, that the principle of life is subject to *change*, and consequently *dissolution*. He explains that life in old age, when the physical frame is worn out, "indicates a *final* extinction—a steadily-increasing decline into childishness, incapacity, and absolute fatuity;" and "the longer life is pushed, the more fatuous does man become—the more and more below the brute creation." Thus do the mental and vital powers of man insensibly die out—*perish*. Dr. Southwood Smith, another of those remarkable men whose writings have been a boon to mankind, makes some valuable observations in his "Philosophy of Health," tending to prove that life is not of that immaterial nature enforced by the clergy. He even goes so far as to affirm that man returns to the condition of the plant. Referring to the question at issue, he explains that there are two kinds of life—*organic* and *animal*. The former implies mere existence, as in plants, and the latter *conscious* existence, as in animals; *animal* life is no more than the principle of sensation added to the organic. The latter is not only anterior to the former, but it is *by the action of the organic that existence is given to the animal life*. The learned author then proceeds to prove that the animal life is entirely dependent upon *organization*, and elucidates the progression of the mind from childhood to manhood, and from manhood to second childhood, as the brain gradually attains maturity with age, and again, with age, decays. He concludes his luminous comments in this form:—"And thus, by the loss of one intellectual faculty after another, by the obliteration of sense after sense, by the progressive failure of the power of voluntary motion—in a word, by the declining energy and ultimate *extinction* of the animal life—man, from the state of maturity, passes a second time through the stage of childhood back to that of

infancy, lapses even to the condition of the embryo. What the foetus *was* the man of extreme old age *is* : when he began to exist he possessed only organic life, and *before* he is ripe for the tomb he returns to *the condition of a plant!*" Relying on this eminent writer, we are bound to endorse that as patent which our theologians consider so frightful—that the animal life, or consciousness, of man gradually decays as the body decays, and eventually, when the animal system becomes decomposed, all personality is annihilated.— Nay, the doctor ventures to propound a sentiment which, falling from my lips, would be reprobated as blasphemous and irreligious. Instead of man living in a state of consciousness in a future world, we are to believe that his mission ends with *this* life, by being absorbed into other animal compounds. He states that when the processes of life are at an end, man falls within the dominion of the powers of Nature—"particle after particle, that stood in beautiful order, fall from their place, the wonderful structure they compose melts away, the very substances of which this structure was built are resolved into their primitive elements; these elements, set at liberty, enter into new combinations, and become constituent parts of new beings; these new beings, *in their turn, perish*; from their death springs life—and so the change goes on in an everlasting circle." I should deem it a work of supererogation to prosecute this discussion further. I have incontrovertibly established, upon most respectable authority, that if the soul means life, it is nothing more than the mere function of animal organism, changing as the body changes, dissolving as the body is dissolved, and, therefore, cannot be endowed with eternal attributes.

We will now return to the point we were considering when we entered upon this important argument—*the idea that the soul comes from Deity*. Are we to understand that God produces every individual soul, or that the one he is reported to have "breathed"

into our first parents is transmitted to their progeny by traduction? If the former, I submit the soul manufactory must be on a very extraordinary scale.—Statists tell us sixty persons are born on an average every minute, or one every second. Should the latter be the mode, then we are led to the absurdity that while the body is begetting a body, the soul is begetting a soul? Strange *philosophy*, indeed! The Bible inclines to the opinion that omnipotence “fashioneth the hearts of all men,” (*vide* Psalms xxii. 9, xxxiii. 15; Jeremiah i. 5.) How is it, if God is the creator of souls, there are so many sinful ones? I cannot conceive why there should be any bad ones at all. Surely it cannot be that he forms wicked souls for the mere pleasure of damning them. Better be without such an ornament, than for it to lead you to the devil. What is the use of the “immortal principle” if it be only to entice you to evil? But if the Deity holds all souls in his own hand, and directs the ways of man himself, as we are instructed to believe in Proverbs xvi. 9, how can a soul do wrong? how can it act *contrary* to the will of God, when it is the will of God which makes it act that way? Responsibility, by this theory, is removed from man to his “maker.” Eternal punishment is shown by Scripture itself to be an injustice and a contradiction.

Another curious query suggests itself—*When does the soul leave the body?* Immediately after death, or not until the “last day?” The Bible, with its characteristic consistency, gives it both ways. Gen. xxxv. 18, and John v. 28. If the soul leaves the body at death, where does it sojourn until “the great judgment day?” It is not, of course, till *after* then we can enter either heaven or hell. Is there a sort of half-way house at which we reside until that eventful hour, and do the good and the bad sojourn together? On the other hand, if we do not rise from the dead until aroused by the sound of the trumpet at the last day, what becomes of the soul in the meantime when

the body is decomposed? When its habitation is gone, where does it reside? Has it to seek for fresh lodgings, and, if so, *where?* Surely it does not amalgamate with the soil? These are very legitimate, though probably not very pleasant, questions for priests to solve.

I must now hasten to put a further interrogatory—*In what direction does the soul proceed, on leaving the body, in order to arrive at the celestial regions?* In what latitude are they located? All that our clergy can vouchsafe to us, is that they are “above.” Now science demonstrates there is no real “above” or “below” in relation to the universe. Owing to the revolution of the earth upon its axis, what appears above us in the morning is below us at night, and *vice versa*. It would be necessary, therefore, the soul should know *what time it is* before it started on its journey, or it might go astray. The soul that was departing for “above”—heaven—might be going “below”—hell—which, I apprehend, would be a *slight* mistake. Supposing two souls, one leaving a body in Australia and another in England, starting at the same moment in a direct line with what would appear to each to be “above,” instead of their arriving at the same point in the universe, the further they proceeded the further they would go from each other. Under these circumstances, they could never meet in heaven, or anywhere else; and perhaps neither would arrive there. Paradise may not be situated in a direct line with either. Where is the infallible chart and celestial chronometer indispensable to our spiritual transit? Can the clergy supply it?

Again—*When would the soul reach its destination?* This, as a matter of course, would depend upon the *distance* and the *speed*. Is heaven as far as the first fixed star? Astronomy teaches that an object flying at the rate of 1000 miles an hour—some twenty times faster than the quickest railway train—would not reach it in 7000 years! That is a rather *long* jour-

ney, I am afraid. Christ himself, who is said to have taken his passage some 1800 years ago, is not, travelling at this wonderful speed, half way on his tour.—Nay, if the world has only existed for 6000 years, Adam himself, poor fellow! is not *yet* at his journey's end.

Allowing the soul, however, to have arrived at its eternal destination, free from all accidents—"safe and sound," as we are proud to say after a tedious trip—supposing that none of those lawless comets which infest the highway of the universe had not knocked all the "spirit" out of it with a frisk of their fiery tail—a grave question remains: *Of what use would the soul be when there, minus those physical organs indispensable to mental action and consciousness?*—Paul intimates (1 Cor. xv. 50,) that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven"—though it is recorded in the same volume that Elijah ascended to heaven in a "whirlwind" just as he was, *in propria persona*, and that Christ performed the same aerial promenade with all the appurtenances of the human body, Thomas having taken care to probe Christ's ribs *after* his appearance from the tomb.

The doctrine of the "spiritual" man only rising from the dead and surviving in a future state, is precisely as preposterous, when strictly examined, as the resurrection of the body, though perhaps not so *palpably* ridiculous to the multitude. Priestcraft seeks to conceal the naked monstrosity of the latter by throwing over it the halo of mysticism. How admirably is this attempted in that pompous specimen of priestly jargon and verbosity—the Church of England Burial Service, taken from the text of the Apostle! We read that "there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown a *natural*

body, it is raised a *spiritual* body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." Did ever you read such sublime nonsense? The grave is a strange laboratory! Paul ought to have given us the *rationale* of such a chemical metamorphosis. We must not delay, however, in following our "spiritual" subject into "heaven," and seeing *there* its condition. I respectfully ask, if the soul be immaterial, how it can experience pleasure or pain for a single moment?—Being destitute of parts or organs, how can it be susceptible of *any* emotions, agreeable or disagreeable? How, therefore, can it be conscious of happiness in heaven or misery in hell? When the Christians affirm that the soul will experience eternal bliss or eternal torture according to its deserts, they flatly contradict themselves. They make the soul possess that which they say it does not—organization. There never was sensation without the faculty of feeling, sight without the sense of vision, &c. When, therefore, you take away the bodily senses, and leave the soul "alone in its glory," you render man destitute of all emotion—a mere negation—a *nonentity*. If the "spiritual man" can exist as well *without* the body as with it, the latter is evidently useless; but if, on the contrary, it be necessary to manifest its functions, the soul, when separated from the body, becomes inoperative. In either view the theologian is placed on the horns of a dilemma. Sir Charles Morgan observes in his "Philosophy of Morals," with that acumen and frankness so peculiar to him, "If the soul employs the brain as an instrument in the act of thinking, then thought is a joint product of the energies of the soul and the properties of the organization; and this being admitted, it follows that the soul *per se* is incapable of the function." The soul being unable to impart any of the five senses to humanity, how can it retain its personality in heaven, where, we are told, those physical powers will not appear, when it is only *by* those instruments that all consciousness is developed?

I repeat if, as divines themselves allow, spirituality can only be known through the medium of a material organ, how can it act in heaven where these material faculties are absent? To assume, notwithstanding, that the soul would still "live, and move, and have a being," is to aver that an effect could exist without its cause. It is to beg the whole question, and ignore at once all rational and legitimate reasoning. Unquestionably to maintain his individuality after the dissolution of the "outer man," the individual must entertain *precisely* the same views, and experience *exactly* the same feelings, as when upon earth. But this cannot be, if he suffers such a radical transformation above the clouds as alleged by divines? The sentiment of love, for instance—of all the passions of the human heart the noblest, the best capable of imparting pure and exquisite sympathies—we are told it will be annihilated in the "world to come." We are assured there will be "neither marrying nor giving in marriage." We are all to be of the *neuter* gender. I should like to know by what test our personality is to be identified. A man on being deprived of a doating wife, or a woman on losing a devoted husband, believing in the doctrine of immortality, expect they will meet again in "another and a better world," and enjoy those delights of which they were deprived by death. But, lo! judge of their astonishment on finding their affection gone, and their viewing each other with as much indifference as they would any other "angel." Imagine some affectionate son who had lost the parent who reared him, or some youth whom the fatal dart had robbed of the object of his adoration, and then conceive their meeting in the "mansions of the blest," the son discovering his mother to be no longer a woman, and the love-sick swain his sweetheart of the same sex as himself! What an elysium it would be to *them*!

I should be proud to submit a few more curious interrogatories, but my time has expired. The whole

doctrine of the immortality of the soul, even allowing such a "spiritual" essence to exist, but which we have shown in an early portion of this discourse to be impossible, involves such gross violations of reason, fact, science, and experience, that the day is not far distant when the enlightened and the virtuous of every clime will silently or openly discard it. They will laugh at the bigot's hell, and pursue that which is right and just, not from the dread of eternal torments, but from the lofty conviction that such a course is inseparable from their own moral dignity, and the safety and progress of society at large. The priestly wand will ere long be broken, and the spell of superstition destroyed.

I am counselled by many excellent friends that such subjects are better "let alone." I cannot concur with this view. I tell them *it is these delusions that keep the masses in the mud*—that rivet the chains which enslave them, and induce them to remain prostrate at the foot of oppression and misrule. Till *these* are exploded the priest will still luxuriate upon their ignorance, and the despot trample upon their rights, in defiance of the patriotism of the noble and generous of mankind. The political potentate knows well that where the mind is free his throne is unsafe. The enlightened will not be his slave, and scorn to be his tool. Hence he keeps in play that mighty engine of despotism—priestcraft—to enslave the intellect, to render it weak, bending, and credulous; and, while thus fettered, he and the idle few bask in the sunshine of splendor and power, while the industrious many remain neglected in misery, toil, and despair. Strike, then, to the *root*, and that glorious age will dawn upon us when—

"Earth's shrines and thrones before our banner fall—  
When the glad slave will at his feet lay down  
His broken chain, the tyrant lord his crown,  
The priest his book, the conqueror his wreath;  
And from the lips of truth one mighty breath  
Shall, like a whirlwind, scatter in its breeze  
That whole dark pile of human mockeries."

## LECTURE SECOND.

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### REVIEW OF POPULAR ARGUMENTS.

**FRIENDS—**

On this occasion it is our pleasing duty to consider the more able and popular arguments usually adduced by theologians in favor of the Immortality of the Soul. Those having reference more particularly to Spiritualism *versus* Materialism we shall notice in subsequent lectures, when debating that question.

We have carefully consulted Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Dick, Dr. Dwight, Rev. J. Aldis, Professor Stewart, and other distinguished writers whom the Christian would esteem as authorities upon this important subject. Not wishing to take advantage of the religious side of the controversy, by answering only their less effective arguments, we have approached the strongholds of their position, as defended by their ablest men, and presume boldly, but respectfully, to grapple with them. Having more respect for truth than talent, we venture to demur to the *dicta* of these eminent advocates, and shall now proceed to demonstrate the fallacy and inconclusiveness of their reasoning.

Probably the most esteemed position in favor of immortality is the following:—"It accords with the fondest hopes and wishes of man; and God would never have implanted in us a desire so predominant, were it not ultimately to be gratified." I reply, it is by no means curious that such a view should be enforced, for, if life is a pleasure, it is far from astonishing that men would wish to prolong that pleasure. But because we *desire* an object, are we *therefore* to infer, as

rational beings, that our inclinations will be realized ? By what canon of logic are we warranted in affirming that an event cannot fail to happen because we *desire* it ? Are our anticipations to be taken as a measure of reality—our hopes as a criterion of fact ? As an *argument*, the question amounts simply to this—“All men *desire* to live forever, therefore they *will* live forever.” I have heard of “jumping to conclusions,” but this exceeds anything on record. If we take an illustration, its gross fallacy will be palpable. The desire to become *rich* is a strong feeling in every human breast. *Therefore* every human being will some day be rich. I might with great propriety maintain that this desire “accords with the fondest hopes and wishes of man ; and God would never have implanted in us a desire so predominant, unless it were ultimately to be gratified.” The argument is a parallel one, and equally conclusive and legitimate. I am happy to hear, if this mode of ratiocination be valid, that the prospects of the toiling and suffering millions of Europe are infinitely brighter than I anticipated. The declaration that “the poor will *never* cease out of the land” cannot be infallible. There are multitudes at this hour who are reduced to the lowest ebb of human wretchedness, naturally solicitous the time may arrive when they may enjoy a share of those “loaves and fishes” monopolized by parties who now delude and oppress them. Therefore, *because* they desire it, their hopes will be consummated ! Oh ! that such reasoning may be tenable ! Obstacles would be removed in the way of every difficulty ! Progress would be a sinecure ! Happiness a certainty ! The Chartist, who is anxious the charter should become “the law of the land,” will gain his object, because he *desires* it ! The Socialist, who has long anticipated the period when “communities” will “cover the earth as the waters cover the sea,” will behold his glorious prospect attained, because he *desires* it ! Most delightful logic, truly ! Yet it is precisely the logic by which our modern divines

demonstrate our eternal existence. The sceptic, it is alleged, deprived of the cheering hope of a future life, desires to be annihilated. Very well. May not *he* conclude, from his desire, that he *will* be annihilated, as the Christian, from *his* desire, that he will live forever? If "desire" be a test in one case, it is in both. Allowing for a moment such a nonentity as the soul to exist, we know that man seeks the everlasting vigor of his *body*. Nevertheless, that desire, "powerful and predominant" though it be is frustrated. Why, therefore, should not the illusive hope for the eternity of the *soul* be frustrated too? The sophistry of this favorite argument is so transparent I need not pursue it further.

We are told, however, that the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul is a "consoling one. Though it *may* be a delusion, it is a pleasing one. Is it not a blessing to man to believe that he will enjoy hereafter that happiness which is denied him upon earth?" I submit nothing can be a permanent blessing to mankind which is not true. It is the *truth*, and not the *comfort*, of the doctrine we are combatting. Would it not be wiser to fortify yourselves with the stern realities of fact, rather than delude your imaginations with the empty dreams of conjecture? Which course would be the most noble and useful? Which the best calculated to secure the *real* happiness of mankind? I am sincerely of opinion that this belief, instead of being a blessing, has been a *curse* to the human family, inasmuch as it has induced the mass of mankind to remain content with the miseries and oppressions around them, under the vain promise of continuous joy in a world to come. By thus cajoling the masses into apathy and ignorance, popular liberty, enlightenment, and prosperity have been impeded, and this beautiful world of ours enslaved by tyrants and impostors. But more of this anon. It must not be forgotten that there are two sides to this question. If Heaven be "inviting," hell, I apprehend, is *rather* "uninviting." Heaven, too, is very difficult, and hell very easy to be

merited. The way to the latter is "broad and open"—any person can find that—in the dark, I suppose; but the road to the former is "straight and narrow, and few there be that find it." Probabilities, therefore—a million to one—are that you will get on the *wrong* road. Surely *that* is not very "consoling." Why is it, if this doctrine be so delightful, it is not taken advantage of more promptly? Even the ultra-orthodox are loathe to leave this world for a "better." They always manage to remain in this "vale of tears" as long as practicable. They seem determined to stay on the *sure* side of the hedge as long as they can, placing less reliance on their pet dogma than the good old Saxon maxim that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the *bush*." The religious community, indeed, give an emphatic negative to this argument every moment of their lives. Instead of offering a premium for the most "express" mode of celestial locomotion, they all seem to entertain an "inward" *doubt* which induces them to have a "longing," not after immortality in a *future* state, but to remain amongst "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world," to the latest possible date.

We now pass to other arguments. A very popular position in confirmation of the doctrine of futurity is, that "it is *necessary* to correct the inequalities of this." So affirms Dr. Dick. Theologians declare that "virtue is not always rewarded and vice punished in this world, and, therefore, there *must* be a future life of rewards and punishments, where the good will meet with their due reward, and the wicked their full punishment." What! because Deity cannot or will not reward virtue and punish vice sufficiently in this world, is that any assurance that he can or will do so in a world to come? Because he allows *injustice* to be perpetrated here, is that a security that he would permit *justice* only to be administered hereafter? If the Orthodox are so "impious" as to assert that he fails to see justice awarded in this life, I dare be so

audacious to aver that he would fail to see it enforced in any other. Christians, in their ordinary transactions, act on the very opposite principle. If a man is dishonest on one occasion, they believe he will be dishonest on another. They do not consider that *because* he is a rogue to-day, that *therefore* he will be an honest man to-morrow. The argument of the unequal distribution of happiness proves too much. It shows that the *brute* creation ought to have a heaven as well as ourselves. There are as great inequalities—as unequal a distribution of happiness amongst them, when compared with each other, as amongst men.—Who will venture to pronounce that *they* have a longing after immortality? Eternal rewards and punishments, instead of “correcting” these discrepancies, enhance their disparity most immeasurably. It would inflict *everlasting* punishment for *temporary* error, and confers endless favor, not so much for an uniformly steady career of practical virtue and usefulness, as mere doctrinal and equivocal belief—and that, too, when avowed only at the eleventh hour, upon the bed of death, or on the steps of the gallows.

Many divines endeavor to establish their favorite theory by arguments drawn from the “constitution of man.” They aver that “the lower animals, and all other parts of Nature, have the objects for which they were destined consummated here, man alone being unhappy, and therefore requiring a future existence to complete the purposes for which he was created.” This assertion, I opine, is altogether unfounded. Brute animals are not perfectly happy, any more than mankind. They are exposed to the same or greater hardships and privations. They are engaged in like contests with men, and even destroying each other, after our “Christian” example. Clearly, therefore, does this argument rest upon a vulgar misapprehension. It is considerate to the Christian not to pursue it further.

Dr. Dick triumphantly observes, that an unanswer-

able proof of the truth of immortality is to be found in "the disordered state of the moral world when contrasted with the regular and systematic order of the material." To this I reply, that if God be perfect, and disposer of all things, he must have *made* the moral world, and made it *perfect*, and consequently there cannot be a "better," *if* there be "another," world. On the other hand, if the moral world be really *imperfect*, and the workmanship of Deity, *he* must be imperfect. Imperfection cannot emanate from perfection, or *vice versa*. The doctor must accept one of two difficulties—that his God is destitute of infinite wisdom, or there cannot be a more perfect world than the present. Either his "Creator" or his argument he will be obliged to discard.

It is affirmed that the "dignity of man requires a more extended sphere than this world affords. A being of such God-like qualities as man will surely not perish like the dog." Such is the stereotyped logic of the pious. This argument, if one it may be called, is only an evidence of the vanity, and not the immortality, of our race. It is not the first time that the clergy, failing to confirm the truth of their dogmas by reason, have attempted to establish them upon the pride of their hearers. Such reasoning involves as grave a reflection upon the "first cause" as the preceding. It implies he has not placed man in the position he deserves. Now, if God be munificent, he would have been anxious to have placed man *at the first* in the best possible circumstances, and, being omnipotent and omniscient, would *necessarily* have done so. But the Orthodox persist they are *not* in the condition the "dignity" of their nature demands. Either, therefore, God has not been *willing* to raise them to that eminence, and hence compromises his goodness, or, being *willing*, has not had the *power*, and thus invalidates his omnipotence. I leave the theologian to admit that his argument in this case is inconclusive, or the Deity is malevolent or weak, or

both. With what an exceeding ill-grace such objections come from the supporters of Christianity, one of the fundamental principles of which is that man, so far from being *dignified* in his nature—of noble, lofty, and virtuous aspiration—is so incorrigibly “depraved and corrupt,” that he is “continually prone to evil as sparks fly upwards.” Oh! Orthodoxy, how we admire thy consistency!

We beg your attention to an argument very convenient for those who are unwilling or incompetent to *reason*. “Never mind your scepticism or your logic,” say they. “I *feel* something here that tells me I shall live in another and a better world. It is the divinity that stirs within us.” Condescending to notice such rant, I need only rejoин, “Never mind your Orthodoxy and your faith, your Bible and your priest. I *feel* something here that tells me I shall”—*not*. One argument is just as legitimate as the other. They both prove the same thing—*nothing*. The *argumentum ad hominem* is suicidal. It cuts both ways.

“The very circumstance,” it is confidently put, “of man conceiving of a future state, is an evidence in its favor. Where did the idea come from if it be not true?” The very circumstance of man *not* conceiving of a future state, I might argue, was an evidence *against* it. The truth is, it is no testimony either way. The mere fact of a man imagining or believing in a thing, is no proof at all of its authenticity, or *vice versa*. Reasoning of this kind would demonstrate every exploded absurdity to be correct. The circumstance of man conceiving of witchcraft, alchemy, astrology, &c., is an evidence of their “truth!” Nay, if this popular argument be conclusive, there can be no error in the world, because every one has an “idea” upon some subject; and if it be true *because* he entertains it, there is an end to all doubt or discussion. Some parties have an idea there is only *one* God, others *three*, and yet *both are right!* Theologians are strange logicians! I might retort, I have

the idea there is nothing but matter in existence.—Quoting our opponents own words, “Where did the idea come from if it be not true ?”

The Rev. J. Aldis, in his able lecture on the Immortality of the Soul, states the following as a strong position against the sceptic :—“The Infidel adduces no *positive* proof in refutation of the doctrine of a future state—that is, he does not *know* man will *not* live again.” The position is equally effective against the other side. The Reverend gentleman and his brethren adduce no “positive” proof in *favor* of immortality—that is, they do not *know* they *will* live again.—With them, indeed, it is mere faith, belief, hope, however amiable and sincere. Not so the sceptic ; he is supported by the universal experience of mankind. All *know* this—that when the organization of a human being is decomposed, we never see him again *in propria persona*. To say I must wait till I am dead and *then* I shall behold him, is only asking me to wait till my eyes are destroyed and then I shall *see*, my tongue and then I shall *speak*, my legs and then I shall *walk* ! When the world is turned “upside down,” when black means white, fact fiction—when everything means exactly what it does *not* mean. I may endorse such “reasoning,” but not *till* then.

Our Reverend opponent remarks, with an air of dogmatism characteristic of his order, “till proof, *demonstrative* proof, can be adduced that this hope is futile, it is madness to surrender it.” I reply, “till proof, *demonstrative* proof, can be adduced that this hope is well founded, it is mere folly to cherish it. What stronger indication in a rational being of mental weakness than to foster a hope, however pleasing, that it cannot be shown to be dependent upon fact or reality? Let it be remembered that the *onus probandi* lies with my opponent, and those who think, with him. It is for the Christian to *prove*, “*demonstrably prove*,” the doctrine of immortality is true, before he can justly call upon the sceptic to accept it.

“Curiosity of man after remote things,” is another highly popular argument. The celebrated professor, Dugald Stewart, seemed very partial to it. It is thus developed. “If man was intended only to be an inhabitant of this globe, and if the principle of curiosity was bestowed on him only in subserviency to his accommodation here, whence is it that he is, in general, led to inquire more anxiously about distant and singular phenomena than about those which, from their nearness and frequency, we should expect to be the most interesting?” Unfortunately this reasoning is not based upon truth. It is not a fact that man takes more interest in distant than in proximate objects. What is the real state of the case? How is it in the scientific world? The great majority of our illustrious countrymen are interesting themselves in what concerns *this* world—geology, chemistry, zoology, natural philosophy, mechanics, &c. And what of *ordinary* life? People manifest the most intense interest in things immediately around them, especially if they can get a *profit* by it. All eyes are open to catch what they can, and let the rest go to the wall. It is only when individuals cannot get what they want in *this* world that they become anxious to “emigrate” to *another*. The clergy may act, or, rather, *profess* to act, upon this philosophy, but even they, while they pretend to take such solemn interest in things *above*—“distant”—keep a sharp eye to what is around them. Their first “curiosity” is to procure a good fat living. What *may* be “hereafter” is an *after* consideration. Curiosity in relation to objects immediate or remote is no proof of immortality. Because man is curious to know his destiny after death, are we thence to conclude that he *will* know? An inference more gratuitous and unwarrantable from such premises could not be conceived, and unless such a conclusion be drawn the argument is irrelevant.

Few points in the controversy before us are held more invulnerable than the famous hit ascribed to St.

Paul. He endeavored to establish his case by analogy. Hesitating to rely on categorical reasoning, he calls in comparison to his assistance. I need not remind you that the *analogical* mode is a very lame way of proving a dogma. It is often fallacious, and generally inconclusive and unsatisfactory. It is eminently so in this instance. Paul wishes to show the possibility of the resurrection by comparing it to the germination of seed sown in the earth. He supposes (1 Cor., chap. xv., 34-46) an individual asking "How are the dead raised up?" To which he answers, with great Christian politeness, "Thou *fool*, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it *die*." Dr. Dwight illustrates the subject thus:—"In this climate, almost the whole vegetable world dies annually under the chilling influence of winter. At the return of spring the face of Nature is renewed, and all the plants, shrubs, and trees, with which it is adorned are again clothed with verdure, life, and beauty." This, says the Dr., is nothing more than a glowing type of the resurrection! Truly our divines are driven to strange sophisms. What parallel can there be between the resurrection of the body of a human being, *in the same form and identity*, after it has once been decomposed and scattered through earth, air, and water, and the fall of vegetable life during winter and its resuscitation at spring? None but a doctor of divinity could have fallen into such a practical mistake as to imagine that vegetation really *dies* during winter. Were such the fact, I apprehend the "verdure, life, and beauty" would never return. Kill the germ, and the seed will never vegetate. This is familiar to the most illiterate Devonshire farmer. Paul, when he observes "Thou *fool*," etc., not only exhibited a want of good *manners*, but of good *sense*. Life, once extinct in an animal or vegetable body, can never revive in the same form and identity. It would be no more preposterous to assume that a tree could live forever when the *root* is destroyed, than that man could eternally survive after the decay

of the animal economy. The *species* may be continued in both cases, but identity or personality is lost at dissolution, and consequently all consciousness of existence.

We are informed that it is "contrary to divine wisdom and goodness to suppose that good men will be annihilated, when, by close and deep study for seventy or eighty years the mind has treasured up vast stores of knowledge and virtue." I reply, that if "divine wisdom and goodness" are to be the standard of *truth*, the theologian will not improve his ground; for why is it, if there be *infinite* intelligence and power regulating our destiny, it should be so ordained that a human being should be taken from amongst us *at all*, much less at the very period when his "knowledge and wisdom" would be of the greatest service to his fellow man? To chide me, and say I ought not to institute such inquiries—that God's ways are not our ways, etc.—is only to rule that we ought not to form *any* judgment of the "wisdom and goodness" of the Deity, and thus the Orthodox stultify themselves. It is only begging the question to introduce such an argument in reply to the sceptic, as it is assuming, as the basis of your reasoning, the influence of a power which is equally questioned by him.

The remainder of the time allowed us must be devoted to the consideration of unquestionably the most popular argument now current in theological literature. *Why* it should be so esteemed I cannot understand. Its fallacy is singularly apparent. "An opinion," reasons Dr. Dick and other divines, "so generally accredited in all countries and in all ages, *must* be true. It is morally *impossible* to be a delusion." The universality and antiquity of the belief is pronounced irrefragable. We submit, however, without hesitation, that the universality of an opinion does not necessarily establish its validity. In the most absolute sense may it be universal, and yet erroneous. History affords abundant instances in confirmation of

this view. The trite example of the solar system is a case in point. Prior to the era of Pythagoras, the impression that the earth was flat, and a fixture, was "generally accredited in all ages and all countries."

*Yet it was fallacious.* How absurd it would have been for the Grecian priesthood to have met the science of the illustrious sage by stating, "Sir, the belief that this earth is flat is generally accredited in all ages and all countries, and therefore must be true." Pythagoras would have smiled at their simplicity, as did Galileo before our modern Inquisition. The argument of universality and antiquity has been propounded in support of every exploded fallacy, both in science and theology. If legitimate, it would demonstrate the existence of witches, sorcerers, alchemy, astrology, and all phases of delusion and imposture that, in various epochs of development, have deluded the human mind. Antecedent to the Reformation, belief in the infallibility of the Pope was "universal" in Christendom. Was it *therefore* true? Was Luther silenced by such reasoning? Were Hervey or Dr. Jenner refuted by such arguments? Why, then, should the sceptic be content with similar fallacies?

But this belief is *not* universal. In a work written by D. H. Kolf, entitled "Voyages of the Dutch brig of war, Dourga, through the southern and little-known parts of the Archipelago, and along the previously unknown southern coast of New Guinea, performed during the years 1825-6," we read of people entirely ignorant of these sentiments. "Of the immortality of the soul," records the writer, "they have not the least conception." "No Arafura ever returned to us after death, and we know nothing of a future state," declared their chiefs. Their idea was "Mati, mati, suda,"—when you are dead there is an end of you. Of the high morality of this people, I shall have occasion to speak in a future lecture. Sidney Smith, in his "Principles of Phrenology," mentions that Peron and other travellers in New Holland bear testimony

to the fact that the natives have no idea of *any* supernatural existence, not even of a God. Moffat, in his "Enterprises in Africa," admits that the Kafirs are also "natural Atheists." The Australian tribes are similarly "benighted." "Voyages of H. M. S. Rattlesnake," recently published, narrate many interesting facts respecting them. "Neither at Cape York, nor in any of the islands of Torres Strait, so far as I am aware, do the aborigines appear to have formed an idea of the existence of a supreme being. The absence of this belief may appear questionable, but my informant, Giom, *spoke decidedly on this point.*" Further proof of the falsity of this popular impression is rendered in a work dedicated to the late President of the United States, John Adams, entitled "Narrative of the loss of the ship Hercules, Captain Benjamin Stent, on the Caffraria coast, 18th of June, 1796." I extract the following: "To be convinced how matters really stood I embraced the present opportunity, and entered into conversation on this subject with the chief, through the medium of our interpreters. After giving him a further description of the storm, and the miseries we had so recently endured, I added, that as it was the pleasure of the Almighty to afflict his creatures, it would be impious in us to repine at his will. The savage, after some consideration, declared he did not understand what I meant by the Almighty. I explained to him my ideas of the divinity; that he was a being of such transcendent power, as to create the world on which we lived—the sun, moon, and stars—and that they all moved and were directed by his hand. His countenance on this occasion demonstrated that his mind was *a perfect void respecting such opinions*; but after a few moments of reflection, he asked if the being I had described possessed power sufficient to control the seas and the wind. I answered immediately in the affirmative. Then, said he, can you tell me his reason for suffering the tempest to throw you upon our coast? I replied, that the reason

for so doing was beyond our finite comprehension, but that as he was not only all powerful but just, we should remain satisfied that all his acts were good and beneficent. When this was explained to the chief, I observed a smile upon his countenance. But starting as if a sudden and hostile thought had seized his mind, he desired to know 'if my Almighty could tame the wild animals of the desert?' I replied that he certainly could. 'If this be true,' exclaimed the savage, '*he must be a very wicked being, for he suffered a lion to kill and eat up my father.*'" The sophistry of the Christian was unable to prevail over the intuitive reason and good sense of the "savage." The most remarkable and triumphant refutation of the universality argument is furnished by the very people who adduce it. The Christian would offer us a book, no inconsiderable portion of which is actually devoted to the history of a people who knew nothing of the Immortality of the Soul till within a few centuries anterior to the Christian era. I allude to the *Jews*. Though Moses is said to have been inspired, he makes no reference to a doctrine deemed so valuable. Bishop Warburton, a very Orthodox prelate, shows that a future state of rewards and punishments is not taught in the whole of the Pentateuch. Similar admissions are made by Ensor, Wilkins, Tillotson, Geddes, and other eminent divines. How strange that the "*chosen people*" of Deity should have been uninformed upon a tenet declared to be so essential to the eternal welfare of mankind! The punishments Moses held out were not "*everlasting damnation*," but to "*visit the sins of the father upon the children, to the third and fourth generation*." His rewards were simply such as "*their corn and their wine shall abound*." His rewards and punishments, indeed, were merely *temporal*. Very strange is it that heaven, through its vicegerent, should be so emphatic in warning the *Jews* against temporal dangers, and not against those infinitely more serious in a world to come, *if such a world really existed*.

The Jews, during their captivity at Babylon, heard for the first time of this fashionable creed. Zoroaster, the founder of the Chaldaic philosophy, had long enunciated it. But even *then* the whole of the Jews did not accept it. On their deliverance, they were divided into two great sects—the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The former endorsed, and the latter ignored it. The Sadducees, who *denied* the doctrine, were the “real original” Hebrews—the true followers of Moses. They took the *Pentateuch* only, to be the genuine word of God, rejecting the rest of the books as spurious. It was *because* Moses did *not* teach a future state that they rejected it.

It is of no avail to assert that, in other writings of the Old Testament, passages can be found confirming a futurity. Did *Moses* teach it, the authorized law-giver of the “chosen people?” As I have stated, the primitive Jews considered that *he* alone was inspired. Moreover, there is no contemporary evidence to establish the fact that the remainder of the books of the Hebrew Bible were known *before* the captivity in Babylon, where the Jews became acquainted with the Immortality of the Soul. This event occurred only some 350 years before Christ, and upwards of 1100 *after* Moses. Allowing these writings to be genuine, they are far from conclusive on the subject. Solomon, the “wisest” of his age, expressed great contempt for the doctrine. In Eccles. iii., he asks, almost in the language of the modern Sceptic, “Who knoweth of the spirit of man that goeth upwards, and the spirit of man that goeth downwards to the earth? Wherefore, I perceive that *there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his portion*: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?” This is precisely the philosophy of the Secularist of our own day. Solomon, to render the matter above all doubt, emphatically affirms that “a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast”—“as the one dieth, so dieth the other”—“all go unto one

place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." Had *I* so expressed myself, no terms too offensive could have been hurled against me. Even David, in Psalm xlix. 12, avers that man "is like the beasts that perish." And again in Psalm cxlvii., 4, he declares that on the "very day man goeth to the grave his thoughts *perish*!"

Perhaps the most significant circumstance connected with our present dispute is, that though our modern Christian speaks with such pride and exultation of the "spirit" living forever, *even some of the early Christians did not believe in Immaterialism*. They were decided Materialists. Tertullian, Jerome, Justin, and others were among this class. Though the Platonic notions of Immortality were introduced amongst Christians at an early date, it was not till the year 249 that the Immaterialists became predominant. I find that about this period they succeeded in condemning, at an Arabian council, some Christians as heretics "who maintained that the souls of men perished with their bodies." It was not, however, till the middle of the *sixth* century that the final adoption of Platonism *as a leading and fundamental doctrine* of Christianity took place. Gregory the Great ascended the Papal chair. This learned Pontiff, highly ambitious, and desirous of rendering the See of Rome independent of the civil power, clearly saw the advantage of giving prominence to such views. The revenues of the church were extremely low. Hence he decreed that the living should pray and *pay*, for the souls of the dead, making remission for their sins by *purchasing* their expiation.

My friends, I have long been firmly of opinion that the dogmas of theology were first established by the clergy, and subsequently upheld by them in order to promote the supremacy and emoluments of their order. The above fact confirms it. The priesthood of all ages have told the multitude that they are a body of men set apart by Providence to prepare our depraved

and miserable souls for "another and a better world." An old, quaint author once said,— "Clergymen expose the kingdom of heaven for sale that with the money they can purchase as much as they can in *this* world, and therefore they extol and magnify one as all shopmen do a commodity they wish to part with, and cry down the other as all buyers are wont to do that which they have the greatest longing to purchase, only to bring down the price and get the better bargain by it." Yes; there is little doubt the clergy have made a capital "bargain" by preaching this doctrine. They are enabled to live in the prettiest house in the village, or the finest mansion in the city; they can enjoy their fox-hounds and their champagne on *this* side of the grave, while those who supply them with "these pomps and vanities of a wicked world" know not where to lay their heads. A man must eschew all in this life for the "Lord's sake," which, according to the best lexicographers, means the *priest's* sake; he must shun all pleasure here on the mere chance of enjoyment *hereafter*. I can only observe, in all sincerity, that while I see those who *preach* the doctrine practically denying it in their every-day life, I shall be compelled to esteem it as a hoax, a snare, and a delusion. While *they* bask amidst plenty, pomp, and grandeur—free from poverty, or the fear of it—the people ought not to be deluded into contentment and toil, but commence in earnest to master those great educational, political, and social problems upon which the freedom and happiness of *this* world depend. I do most earnestly trust, as conducive to this end, that the thoughtful and laborious artizans of England will study—I say *study*—those great political and social text-books:—Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man," W. Thompson's "Production and Distribution of Wealth," Robert Owen's "Development of a New State of Society," Godwin's "Political Justice," &c., instead of nodding over the "Pilgrim's Progress," "Saint's Rest," "Call to the Unconverted," and those

loads of holy verbiage that are only circulated to induce the people to hug still more closely the chains that have fettered them—feed still more generously the powers who oppress them. Once engaged in such noble self-culture, we shall no longer behold the working men and women of our country walking abroad on the Sabbath with the white of their eye turned up to the clouds, and a gorgeously bound copy of Wesley's hymns or the Prayer-book in their hand, so modestly and yet so significantly placed as to say to the passer-by, “Do look how pious I am, how godly, how Christian!” and then terminating their peregrinations by entering once more into those temples of bricks and mortar which are only of man's making, listening for the thousandth time to the venerable story that they are a race of “miserable sinners,” and they must continue to pray for their Emperors, Kings, Queens, Bishops, Prime Ministers, and “all the powers that be.” Oh! instead of these sickening scenes we should contemplate them, even on the Sabbath day, as if the sense of moral greatness and independence was within them, with a good, substantial copy of Shelley's “Queen Mab,” or Mackay's “Voices from the Crowd,” in their pocket, hastening to those common temples of man—the green fields, and shady retreats of our land, and there, communing with the pure, the gentle, the lovely, see gladness in the ultimate triumph of the millions from the beauties and glories around them!

## LECTURE THIRD.

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### RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

FRIENDS—

We purpose to grapple this evening with the “stronghold” of the Christian clergy in reference to the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul—the resurrection and ascension of Christ. This marvellous story constitutes the great foundation of the Christian’s hope of a future state. It is a matter, therefore, of especial moment to ascertain the credit to be attached to such an extraordinary event. If we succeed in showing the authenticity of this account is not established, we take from Orthodoxy the very corner-stone of its faith. The whole fabric is irreparably shaken, and must inevitably fall to the ground. Upon our important task, then, let us enter.

At the threshold of the argument, we ask why is it that a phenomenon so astounding, instead of possessing that clear and indisputable proof which is imperatively required, bears, on the contrary, every mark of a forgery—a fraud? An occurrence so incredible as the resurrection of a human being ought to be confirmed by testimony so conclusive there could be no moral possibility of doubting it for one moment. The truth is, however, the evidence is purely *ex parte*, and withal so meagre and contradictory that it would not be accepted, relating to any other case, in the meanest law court in Europe.

Where do we find the history of this “miracle”? *In the New Testament alone.* The apocryphal books

Christians themselves repudiate as spurious. Not a single *contemporary* author, *external* to the "inspired" writings, confirms the resurrection.

Philo, a contemporary of Christ, and the most eminent historian of the first century, though he gives an elaborate account of the state of the Jews, under Augustus, Tiberius, and Caius Caligula—*the very period embracing the whole extent of Christ's life*—says not a word about the resurrection, either in doubt or corroboration. He does not even allude to Christ in *any* form. Philo was sent by the Jews as ambassador to Rome only eight years after Christ's death. Philo, indeed, *was in Jerusalem at the very time the resurrection is said to have occurred*. Yet he is absolutely silent on the subject. Josephus, too, is *silent*. The passage in his writings referring to Christ, is admitted to be an interpolation by Christians themselves. Pliny, who wrote the "History of his own Time," in thirty books, makes no mention of this wonderful demonstration, which could not have escaped his observation. The younger Seneca, a voluminous author and a scientific man, does not allude to it. He records all the eclipses of his time, but makes no allusion to that displayed at Christ's crucifixion. Diogenes, Laertius, Pausanias, Mela—authors of distinction of the first century—are equally silent. So is Tacitus, for though he refers to Christ, he says nothing of the resurrection. Not a line of contemporary evidence can be found. Could this be at all possible if such an astounding circumstance had really transpired? The only independent testimony I have heard quoted is Pontius Pilate. Even this, however, is now given up as a ridiculous forgery. Pilate is represented as having written a letter to the Emperor Tiberius in his capacity of Governor of Judea, in which it is pretended he speaks favorably of the resurrection; but the language ascribed to him is so hyperbolical and childish, divines of any repute are ashamed to refer to it. Dr. Lardner, in his "Heathen Testimonies," vol. I., c. 2,

declares, with great contempt, that "the acts of Pontius Pilate, and his letter to Tiberius, which we now have, are not genuine, but *manifestly spurious*." Dr. Du Pin, "Scripture Canon," vol. II., c. 7, states that "we have no proof it was extant in Eusebius's time, and it is absurd to suppose that Pilate should write such things of a man whom he himself had condemned to death."

Where, then, is the independent and contemporary testimony absolutely necessary to settle the question? The clergy have none—not a line—not a sentence—not a word! One of the more unscrupulous champions of Orthodoxy, whom I recently met in public debate, hard pressed for a reply, referred, as *contemporary* evidence, to Celsus the "Infidel" who flourished about the year 176. How a person could give *contemporary* evidence who did not live till nearly 150 years *after* Christ, I cannot understand! I deny, advisedly, that we have the true testimony of Celsus. We have only what Origen, his unprincipled opponent, thought proper to put in his mouth. His works, with those of all "unbelievers," were publicly *burnt* by order of Christian officials. Not a page of the genuine writings of Celsus is extant. I repeat, we have only what Origen, to suit his purpose, ascribed to him. There was no printing press in those times to check clerical misrepresentation. Origen was notoriously in the habit of sacrificing truth to the "interest of the church." An English prelate, Bishop Horsely, in his reply to Dr. Priestly, distinctly declares of him that he "was not incapable of asserting in argument *what he believed not*, and that a strict regard to truth was not one of the virtues of his character. Time was when the practice of using *unjustifiable* means to serve a *good* cause was openly avowed, and Origen *himself was amongst its defenders*." To expect a faithful report of the admissions of Celsus from such an antagonist is preposterous; and any controversialist of our day who would wish to palm such evidence

upon the public is himself unprincipled, and "not incapable of asserting in argument what he believed not." The early Christians would never have burnt, by public edict, the works of that learned Sceptic, had they really contained any concessions to their advantage. The champion before alluded to, coolly says that it is "amusing to hear the outcry of Infidels, for destroying the works of Celsus." Had they not been "puny and feeble," his "own followers would have preserved many copies." Had they been "puny and feeble," his *opponents* would never have *destroyed* them. This writer speaks as if books in the second century were "as plentiful as blackberries in autumn," and as accessible to the multitude as at the present hour. To attempt to convey such an impression, and found an argument upon it, is simply ridiculous. Be it as it may, Celsus does not render *contemporary* proof. Of the latter, indispensable to the confirmation of the story, there is literally *none*. To quote the *Scriptures* to prove the authenticity of *Scripture*, is really no evidence. Precisely as absurd would it be to place a prisoner in the witness-box to attest his own innocence. It is asking the Sceptic to believe the *Scriptures* authentic, and *then* you will convince him they *are* so. Exactly! Nothing so easy! Get an opponent to admit that which he denies, and he will not need *convincing*. Under such circumstances, concession is conviction. We are sceptical of the resurrection, because we sincerely *doubt* the authenticity of the book which records it. To *assume* that authenticity, therefore, is begging the whole question.

But, allowing the *Scriptures*, and especially the *Gospels*, upon which the truth of the resurrection mainly depends, to be brought as evidence, we ask, in the first place, who wrote these *Gospels*? Nobody knows! Most *conclusive* testimony truly, when not even the names of the writers of the story are clearly made out! Were such a case now introduced, the grand jury would ignore it with derision, considering

it beneath the dignity of even a trial. I am aware it is *said* these books were written by four men, called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But where is the proof of the fact, *external* to the book? We have only the bare statement of the Christian Fathers. Simon, in his "Critical History of the Text of the New Testament," admits candidly, "We have no solid proof in antiquity to make it appear to us that the names set at the head of our Gospels were thereunto prefixed by those who were the authors of them." Professor Du Pin, in his "History of the Canon," confidently rules that we have only the testimony of the Fathers for the genuineness of the Gospels. And who were they? Parties upon whom an honorable man can place reliance? Individuals interested in declaring the truth, and the truth only? Persons who were never known to prevaricate or misrepresent? The query excites a smile in those familiar with ecclesiastical history. Professor Mosheim, the popular Christian historian, in his great work, part ii., settles this point. He states that it was an "*uniform maxim*" among the early Christian Fathers "that it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by that means the interests of the Church might be promoted." And further, "It was considered that they who made it their *business* to deceive, with the view of promoting the cause of truth, were deserving rather of *commendation* than *censure*." Would men imbued with such an *honorable* policy hesitate to invent the story of the resurrection, or any other "*pious fraud*," when it would promote the cause of "*truth*" and "*the interests of the church*"? What observes Eusebius himself, the most celebrated of the Fathers? "Without Eusebius," says the Christian Tellimont, "we should scarce have had any knowledge of the history of the first ages of Christianity. *Subsequent historians have only begun where he ended.*" Modern authors have thus been compelled to rely on the veracity of this divine. And what a reliance! In his "Evan-

gelical Preparations," book xii., c. 31, he positively entitles one of his chapters as follows: "How far it may be *proper* to use *falsehood as a medicine*, and for the *benefit* of those who *require* to be deceived." "I have reported," says he, "whatever may redound to the glory, and suppressed all that could tend to the *disgrace* of our religion!" This is the *honest* priest upon whom Christian writers depend for their evidences. How can our modern theologians presume to assert that these books were genuine or authentic, when their only authority is the *ipse dixit* of men who deem it an "act of virtue" to impose upon the more ignorant of the masses? When will the thinking and rational of mankind rise above vulgar prejudice, and boldly affirm they cannot accept a story resting upon evidence which no enlightened and honorable mind could conscientiously trust? For a more elaborate *expose* of the Fathers, I must refer you to my "Lectures on the Bible."

It is confidently asserted by popular clergymen, that the gospels were often quoted in the first century as being written by Matthew, &c. Quoted by whom? Philo, Josephus, Pliny, Mela, Pausanias, Tacitus, and other leading historians of the era? No. Not one of them mentions such men, which could not have been possible had their writings been extant, and produced the sensation so vauntingly assumed. Even the Christian Fathers do not *NAME* them till the close of the *second* century. The first time any mention is made of the gospels as the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, was in the year 182, by the Father Irenæus. So says Tellimont. How strange that the only histories of the resurrection *deemed authentic* should remain unnamed till 150 years after it is said to have taken place! Could such a thing be probable, had so extraordinary an event actually occurred? We are flippantly told by Christian disputants that they can "do without the Fathers." They will "make the Sceptic a present of them," &c. Never-

theless, to meet the above objection they fly to the "Fathers" for succor, and cite them to prove that *other* Christian productions were mentioned, and when you follow them to those writings to show how flatly they contradict our present gospels, they declare they cannot be relied on! They are "spurious," "untrue," "apocryphal," "pious frauds," &c. They are *true* if the Christian finds it convenient to quote them, but *untrue* if the Sceptic follows his example! I deny most emphatically that our divines can "do without the Fathers." I challenge them, advisedly, deliberately challenge them to name *any* author, *independent* of the Fathers, who refers to the resurrection during the very period necessary to establish the authenticity of the fact—*the first century*.

Supposing, however, that the gospels were genuine—*i. e.*, written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—what credit can be given to any of them, seeing they *grossly contradict* each other in almost *every* particular? Such witnesses would be rejected in any part of Christendom.

Permit me to submit a few of these discrepancies. First, of those who came to the *sepulchre*. Matthew xxviii., 1, says, that it was Mary Magdalene and another Mary who came; Luke xxiv. 10, asserts that besides the two Marys, Joanna and *other women came*; while, according to John xx. 1, we are actually told that, instead of being *two* women, as stated by Matthew, and a *number* of women, as given by Luke, there was only *one* person at the sepulchre—Mary Magdalene. Which of these writers is to be believed? Mark states that the visitants *went into the sepulchre*, but Matthew says they *went away very abruptly*.—When entered, Mark declares they saw *one* young man, Luke says *two*. Matthew records, xxviii. 5–6, that the *angel* told the women of Christ's rising from the dead; but John xx. 14 to 17, narrates that it was not the *angel*, but *Christ himself* who told them.—What a *concordance*, forsooth! According to Luke

xxiv. 12, when Peter came to the sepulchre he only stooped down and *looked* into it, and did *not* go in; but John actually asserts that he *did* go in, and *another disciple with him!* When *doctors* differ, who is to settle the question? Matthew relates again xxviii. 9, that when they saw Christ they *worshipped him, and held him by the feet*; but John declares xx. 17, that Christ *would not let him touch him*. Which of these stories must we endorse? Matthew and Luke informs us that the visitants to the sepulchre went away to tell the disciples the words which the *angel* (as Mark says,) or *angels* (as Luke states) spoke to them; and Luke expressly observes, xxiv. 9, that they told *all* these things to the eleven; but Mark narrates, xvi. 8, that they *said nothing to anybody*, for they were *afraid*. With respect to the *first* appearance of Christ, it is somewhat amusing to mark the contradictory accounts given of it. Mark says, xvi. 9, Christ was first seen by Mary Magdalene, but does not explain *how or where*; but Luke records, xxviii. 13, that his first appearance was made to Cleopas and another on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. What a well authenticated fact the resurrection is truly, when the writers who pretend to give an account of it cannot agree as to who *first* saw him after such a wonderful resuscitation! In reference to Christ meeting the disciples, Matthew xxviii. 6 to 17, mentions that the disciples went to Galilee to meet him *according to appointment*; but Luke intimates, xxiv. 33 to 36, that he appeared to them, *quite unexpectedly, at Jerusalem*. Luke says, also, that when they *did* meet him the disciples were *terrified*; but John records, 20, that they were *glad* to meet him!

Regarding the *ascension*—an event as miraculous as that of the resurrection, and forming part of the controversy—it is singular that not one of the apostles present says a word about it. It is only reported by Mark and Luke, who were not disciples at the time, and who do not profess to have seen Christ dead or

alive. Matthew, John, Peter, James, and Jude, who all are alleged to have written of Christ, and must have been eye-witnesses of his ascension, take not the least notice of such an extraordinary exhibition. But even Mark and Luke do not give the same account. Mark says, xvi. v. 19, that Christ ascended from the place where *the apostles were set at meat at the house in Jerusalem*; but Luke affirms, xxiv., v. 50, that he first led them out to *Bethany*, and *then* ascended. Which of these accounts is authentic? Oh! consistent and infallible historians, scarcely to agree in any one particular on any one subject! The writings of men who so flagrantly contradict each other are utterly unworthy of credit. They who would accept them would set at defiance all acknowledged principles of rational evidence, and believe any statement, however unfounded or untrue, if it was for the "benefit of the church." Not the least characteristic apology tendered for these fatal discrepancies is, that there is just "diversity sufficient to prove there could have been no conspiracy in their production!" Indeed! *Contradiction* in evidence does not evince there is falsehood *somewhere*, but simply "diversity!" This is a new reading of the law of evidence. For the first time I learn that in order to establish the *truth* of a story, a dash of falsehood is needed to confirm it! I will not spend time in discussing whether this "diversity" shows there was no "conspiracy," but I do affirm these inconsistencies and contradictions testify they are not *infallible* historians, and therefore could not have been *divinely* instructed to enlighten mankind. We are called upon to believe the resurrection *because* it is an *inspired* story—a position I hold to be untenable if one line only of discrepancy can be detected. Destroy its infallibility, and you destroy its claim. The clergy, when enforcing the truth of the Scripture, attach especial weight to its being "divinely inspired," but when the intelligent Sceptic points out numerous incongruities, they endeavor to explain them away by

reasoning as if they were the productions of ordinary men, liable to the errors of *fallible* life. This is neither honest nor consistent. The Evangelists were either fallible or infallible. If the former, the Sceptic may be as correct in his estimate of their productions as the Christian; if the latter, we have a right to expect that the four Gospels should be *absolutely* identical in every chapter, every verse, every sentence, every word. Once admit incongruity in an *inspired* composition, and its prestige is destroyed—its claim vitiated.

The crowning assumption in this controversy is thus put. The resurrection is not founded upon *opinion*, but *facts* tangible to the senses. They could be *seen*, *heard*, and *felt*. If the Apostles *saw* Jesus with *their own senses*, we *must* believe them.” Yes, *if* they did. *That* is the question. But who says they *saw* him? Contemporary historians and natural philosophers of repute, who would neither omit nor misrepresent an important “*fact*”? No; but the Gospels say so. And who wrote the Gospels? Matthew, Mark, &c. And who says they wrote them? The Christian Fathers. And who were they? Persons who “deemed it an act of *virtue* to *deceive and lie*,” and who used “*falsehood as a medicine* for those who require to be *deceived*”; recording only that which “would add to the *glory*, and suppressing all that would tend to the *disgrace of their religion*”! Such is the “*irrefragable proof*” which “the leading Infidels of the day have declined to encounter.” My friends, it rests for the Christian clergy to establish by *direct, positive, and disinterested* evidence that the Apostles *did* see the resurrection, before they dogmatically *assume* it to be *patent*, and taunt the Free Enquirer for denying what was “*tangible to the senses*.” I demand this proof. I have again and again asked for it, but my call still remains “*unanswered and unanswerable*.” Ocular evidence is deemed very conclusive by modern divines in relation to the miracle under dispute. “*If the Apostles saw Jesus, we must believe them*.” Will

they endorse this test? Will the *Protestant* clergy stand by it? There is scarcely a Catholic miracle on record which is not supported by "eye-witnesses." The objections so ably urged by the Protestant clergy to their testimony, apply with equal force to the resurrection, or any other miracle, and especially to those said to have been performed in the early ages, when imposing upon the vulgar was the "maxim" of the times. The distinguished historian before quoted, observes: "The simplicity and ignorance of the *generality* of those times, furnished the most favorable occasions for the exercising of fraud, and the impudence of impostors in contriving false miracles was artfully proportioned to the *credulity of the vulgar*; while the sagacity of the wise, who perceived these cheats, were overawed into silence by the dangers that threatened their lives and fortunes if they should expose the artifice. Thus does it generally happen in human life, that when danger attends the discovery of truth, and the profession thereof, the prudent are silent, the multitude believe, *and impostors triumph.*" The following reasoning of Cardinal de Retz against a Catholic miracle which his former "brethren" wished to palm upon mankind, is quite as conclusive against miracles generally:—"It was not necessary, in order to reject a fact of this kind, to be able accurately to disprove the testimony, and to trace its falsehood through all the circumstances of knavery and credulity which produced it. He knew this was commonly altogether impossible at any small distance of time, so it was extremely difficult, *even were one present on the spot*, on account of the bigotry, ignorance, cunning, and roguery of a great part of mankind." He concluded that a miracle supported by any "HUMAN testimony was more properly a subject of derision than argument." The following is a Catholic miracle said to have been performed during the Italian war in 1797. Will the Protestant apply his rule and adhere to it? We are solemnly told 60,000 people beheld

this miracle, and believed it through the "evidence of their own senses." The French were supposed to have entered Italy to overthrow Papal Christianity, whereupon "numerous pictures of the Virgin Mary *opened and shut their eyes* in different parts of that country, during an interval of six or seven months." This miracle was attested not by a select "eleven," but 60,000 persons, "who voluntarily deposed that they repeatedly beheld the prodigy with their *own eyes*." If the 60,000 *DID* see this "with their own senses," we "*must* believe them!" Will the Protestant acknowledge this evidence conclusive? Will he believe that the "Holy Virgin" and "Mother of God" really caused canvass and paint representations of herself "to open and shut their eyes" repeatedly during seven months, in the face of multitudes of witnesses? I know he will not believe it. Why then should he presume to call upon the Sceptic to accept a miracle *on the same kind of evidence he rejects with contempt*? This miracle, and others I could name, is infinitely better attested than the Resurrection. If *he* is not convinced, why should *I* be?

These men "laid down their lives for the Resurrection. They suffered death, rather than deny it," we are triumphantly told. Where is your assurance, external to the inventors of the story, demonstrating that the eleven, or any part of the eleven, experienced martyrdom "for not denying their own senses?"— *Other* disciples suffering death for *believing* they saw him amounts to nothing. Hindoo, Mahomedan, Catholic, and Mormon miracles can be shown to be "facts and not opinions," on the same ground. To quote the New Testament to confirm New Testament statements, is no more satisfactory or conclusive than to cite the Koran to prove Mahomedan statements, or the Book of Mormon to establish Mormon averments. If legitimate in one case, it is in all; and thus there is an end to truth, principle, or consistency. Respectfully, but distinctly, challenging refutation of the

arguments so far developed, we proceed to consider other features of this extensive question.

It appears that some queer doubts existed amongst the early Christians themselves. By consulting Dr. Lardner, vol. iv., p. 368, I find that Cerinthus taught that "Christ was crucified—that he did *not* rise from the tomb, but *will* do so." According to this famous Christian, therefore, the Resurrection has *not* taken place, and the idle tales circulated on the subject are, as I believe them to be, a tissue of fabrications. Even Paul, in 1 Cor., chap. xv., confirms the fact of there having been a difference of opinion among early Christians upon this subject. He says, "Now, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no Resurrection of the dead?" Rev. Dr. Arnold, in his "Lectures on History," further confirms this important coincidence. He observes, "We know that in the earliest churches there existed the strangest varieties of belief, some Christians not even believing that there would be a Resurrection." If *Christians* doubted the Resurrection *then*, *Sceptics*, I presume, are not presumptuous in doubting *now*. The more prevalent opinion amongst the early Christian converts, and one co-existent with the death of Christ, was, says Mosheim (I., p. 136), "that Christ existed in *appearance* only, and not in reality, and that his body was a mere *phantom*." Dr. Priestly, in "Church History" (I., p. 97), confirms this statement, and adds that this opinion "was received by all persons who pretended to philosophy or more knowledge than the vulgar, and the better educated among the Christian converts." *They*, therefore, could not have believed the "authorised version." Barnabas, translated by Archbishop Wake in his "Apostolic Fathers," avers that Jesus was not crucified, but that Judas was crucified in his stead. Very probable is it that it was Paul's design "to preach Christ and him crucified," in opposition to Barnabas, that caused the bitter and implacable animosity be-

tween them, recorded in the Acts. Dr. Hug, in his "Introduction to the New Testament," also mentions a numerous body of early Christians—the Ebionites—who denied the miraculous conception of Christ, and, with the Nazarenes, looked upon him only as an ordinary man. They further *denied* that he suffered on the cross, asserting that his body *had flown away to heaven!* What are we to think of the validity of a doctrine about which Christians themselves entertained the most marked difference of opinion? If *they* demurred, may not *we*?

It has been plausibly surmised that Christ did not actually die upon the cross, but only fell into a swoon, and in that state was carried away by Joseph and Nicodemus. Were similar circumstances reported at the present age, such would be the general impression in intelligent circles. It would be considered that the individual was in a state of catalepsis—an occurrence far from unusual, persons having been known to *seem dead* for seven or eight days, and then recovered their consciousness. The historian Lipsius states that criminals after having been nailed to the cross, linger out their lives for several days, until a loss of blood, or hunger, put an end to their tortures. John records that Christ was put on the cross at the sixth hour, and died at the ninth. There is a material difference between three hours and three days. The probability is, therefore, that he fell into a swoon, the thieves crucified with him exhibiting such little punishment as to be able to rail at him and converse. Parties who have been exposed to more excruciating and exhausting torture than the cross—the rack, for instance—have survived a considerable period. The legs and arms not being absolutely necessary to vitality, their dislocation would not produce immediate dissolution. Simmons observes that it is doubtful whether at that early age it was the custom to nail the feet also. It was usual to place a notch upon the cross on which the feet might rest. Binding them was found to

answer the purpose. Thomas would not believe till he had seen on Christ's *hands* the print of the nails; but the *feet* are not mentioned. Could such slight suffering destroy life in three hours? In opposition to this reading of the story, it has been urged that the soldiers pierced him with a spear. Such a wound, it is replied, is not necessarily mortal, many people having been wounded in the side and recovered. Moreover, only one of the Evangelists, John, records this circumstance, who says it was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, where it states that "they shall look upon him whom they pierced." But the Scripture has *not* been fulfilled, for the Jews do not look upon him "to this day." The most suspicious circumstance is that Joseph, a friend of Christ's, went and obtained permission of Pilate to have the body, and he and Nicodemus, another friend, wrapped it in clean linen, and deposited it in a new sepulchre belonging to Joseph, in his own private garden. Of course it was necessary to make the appearance of a funeral to lull suspicion; but the two friends, there is little doubt, would adopt every means to resuscitate him, which would not be impossible after so short an interval.

A seal was put upon the door of the sepulchre to prevent Christ's escape, answer the opposite party. True; but not till the day after the burial. Why was not this done *at first*? It is a useless precaution to put a lock on the door when the horse is stolen. Notwithstanding there is no proof, there was not imposture, inasmuch as the priests and elders who put on the seal were not present when it was broken.

The Orthodox affirm, with peculiar exultation, that Christ predicted his Resurrection. In Matthew, chap. xii., v. 40, he foretells that he would be "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, as Jonah had been three days and three nights in the whale's belly," — a kindred story, I must confess. Unluckily this prophecy, so plain and explicit, was not fulfilled. Supposing Christ to have been buried on Friday even-

ing, and just risen when Mary called at day-break on Sunday morning, he could not have been "in the heart of the earth" above thirty or thirty-five hours, which is not "three days and three nights." If Christ publicly predicted he would rise again on the third day, he ought to have appeared *publicly* in Jerusalem at that time, and not confined himself to his own immediate followers—the very parties interested in carrying out the imposture. Already engaged in forming a sect, they could not be *disinterested* in their report. Christ, I reiterate, ought to have risen *openly*, before as many witnesses as were present at his crucifixion. Why not show himself to the whole city, and especially the chief priests and elders, to convince them of the identity of his person? *That would have been too straightforward and tangible for "the benefit of the church."* Matthew intimates that his rising from the dead on the third day was to be the *very* sign by which the chief priests and elders were to believe in him. But this sign was not given, at least to *them*, and therefore, consistently with his own decision, they ought not to believe.

Irrespective of evidence, external or internal, I am at a loss to understand how I or any other human being can derive satisfactory proof that *we* shall rise from the dead because Christ did. What fair analogy is there between the reanimation of a body in the course of a few hours, and the resurrection of bodies that have been decomposed thousands of years? Had Jesus risen when his body had undergone complete decomposition, and its primitive elements scattered as it might be, and the fact confirmed in the presence of a whole nation, not immediately biassed in its favor, but capable of giving independent and disinterested testimony, the case would have been materially different. Such a rendering of the Resurrection, however, is not submitted to us. The test, I presume, would be *too* severe. Nevertheless, it is the ordeal I suppose through which *we* are to pass. Taking the

destiny of Christ as the type of our own, we must believe, not merely that the "spiritual" man will reside in the "mansions of bliss," but the "carnal" also. Christ rose in the *body* as well as the *spirit*. Thomas thrust his hands into Christ's *ribs* when risen. Luke informs us (chap. xxiv., v. 30-43), that at Emmaus Christ sat down to supper, *after* his resurrection, with the two disciples he met by the way-side, and again with the eleven, eating a piece of broiled fish and honeycomb. Are we to understand that food is necessary to sustain vitality subsequent to our sublunary career, or why should Christ partake of it? Let us hope there will be no corn laws in the "promised land." A question may be legitimately started here. Does the body rise in the same state as when death occurred? Does the victim of consumption appear with his lungs ulcerated, or of paralysis with his frame distorted? What a scene of disease, deformity, and decrepitude the future world will present! Our veteran warriors, who had the "glory" to lose a leg or an arm at Trafalgar or Waterloo, will appear, I suppose, without them, or carry with them their wooden ones. I will not say what kind of angels *they* will make. On the other hand, should we rise perfectly free from all affections or mutilations, I respectfully ask who officiates as physician and surgeon-general in the meantime, and where are the healing processes carried on? Do our pensioners find those members of the body lost in Egypt or India, forty or fifty years ago, awaiting them in heaven, or is there a grand scramble for them at the "last day"? What a rooting up of the dry bones of Orthodoxy! Pardon me, the subject is too absurd to command dispassionate attention. Viewed with the eye of philosophy or common sense it is alike incredible. Can any man of ordinary understanding deliberately believe, when we see the body decomposed, and widely scattered through water, earth, and air, that these identical parts will again be collected and reanimated, to form the same *identical* being? When we

add to this, that the matter which now constitutes my body may become immediately the prey of other animals, or, at dissolution, absorbed by vegetables, which vegetables may become the food of other creatures, and subsequently eaten by other human beings, forming part of *their* bodies, and in succession enter into an almost infinite number of bodies, and if these are *all* to rise again *in propria persona* at the great "judgment day," parts of the same being must be taken from an indefinite variety of objects at one and the same time, and yet all to remain complete! Will any one, *compos mentis*, really assert that such is within the range of physical possibility? The time has surely arrived when the intelligent and the rational will frankly ignore a theory that could only be accredited in the times of Grecian and Roman mythology.

One more point and I conclude. Presuming the Resurrection possible, how could the *Ascension* be realized? How could a human being, with its specific gravity, unassisted by scientific appliances, ascend into the atmosphere like a bird? It is a fundamental law in natural philosophy that nothing can ascend into the air which is heavier than the atmosphere itself. To suppose, therefore, that Christ, or any other being, composed, as he was, of flesh and blood like ourselves, could fly into space, is an outrage upon the plainest principles of science; and to insist upon belief in such a monstrosity at the peril of eternal misery, is an intolerable insult to the age in which we live. Mankind have too long sacrificed their reason at the altar of credulity and fanaticism. Let them now declare their intellectual manhood, throw off their mental leading-strings, and rise to the greatness of their own nature, the dignity of their own claims, and the glory of their own mission. While the people of Europe have been dreaming of their fate when *dead*, they have neglected to consider what became of them while *living*. Hence their slavery, toil, and wretchedness. The priest and the tyrant have triumphed in

their ignorance. Their thrones and their mitres rest upon their superstitions, crushing in the bud the great, the noble, and the free! Oh! awake from your delusions. Unshackle that reason so long held in contempt by those who scornfully despise you as the “vile rabble.” Let the world behold the force of *thought* subduing the wand and the sword, and—

“Man will learn his POWER,  
And leave his wants and woes *behind.*”

## LECTURE FOURTH.

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### PHILOSOPHY OF MATERIALISM.

**FRIENDS—**

MATERIALISM *versus* Spiritualism is the topic now before us. It is perhaps the most momentous question connected with this controversy. It involves the point at issue between ourselves and the theological world. If Materialism be true—if nothing but *matter* exists—the whole doctrine of the Immateriality and Immortality of the Soul is essentially and fundamentally fallacious. Establishing this position, all further discussion is supererogatory.

Modern theologians reason thus. The soul is the mind, the intellect, the thinking principle in man; and assuming this to be undeniable, they gratuitously infer, as a *necessary* sequence, that it is immaterial, and hence eternal. Matter, say they, emphatically, cannot think, and, therefore, a “Spiritual essence” is indispensable to mental manifestation. This, I submit, is simply begging the question to be demonstrated. It behooves the Spiritualist to *prove* that matter cannot think before he attributes the phenomena of thought to any other principle. When reminded of this duty, and pressed for his facts, he will argue, “if matter thinks, a stone can think, a cabbage can think,” &c. Profound logic, truly! What does it amount to? Precisely this. Because *all* matter does not think, therefore *none* does. As legitimate would it be to conclude that because all matter is not inflammable, *therefore* none is; because all matter is not opaque,

*therefore* no matter is opaque; because all matter, in certain conditions, as stones or metals, is not capable of affording nourishment to plants and animals, *therefore* no matter can be capable of so doing; or, because all matter is not injurious to animal and vegetable life, *therefore* none is. The fallacy of such reasoning is palpable to any one familiar with the ordinary rules of Whately or Mill. It is attempting to draw what the logician terms a *universal* negative from a particular negative—a mode of argument no less unsound than absurd. The Materialist never affirmed that *all* matter could think, but simply *organized* matter—a distinction which the Spiritualist finds it convenient to forget when meeting the question. Had this cardinal distinction been kept in view, the masses would never have been deluded with such stupid fallacies. We shall return to this point presently.

When the inconclusiveness of the above ratiocination is exposed, the Spiritualists further observe:—“You may reason as you like; you may employ all the logic you can command, but we *know* matter cannot think. No person of common sense will deny it.” This is only to resort to that argument-made-easy—it is so because it *is* so; matter cannot think because—*it cannot!* We deny, however, that the theologian *knows* matter cannot think. Where is the man who will affirm that he is familiar with **ALL** that matter can do? Why, then, dare any one affirm that he *knows* **ALL** that matter **CANNOT** do? Before it can be alleged what matter *cannot* do, we must understand *all* that it *can* do. I hold, therefore, that until we are sure that we have exhausted **EVERY** material cause, we have no rational ground upon which to speak of *immaterial* causes. How can the theologian predicate that matter is incapable of cerebration unless he pretends to a perfect knowledge of **ALL** the properties which it possesses, and may acquire by combination? I call upon them to produce the philosopher who assumes to be in possession of this knowledge, and I

will give them the range of the whole civilized world. They may select from the most experienced anatomists or profound chemists living. And even if they could produce such a personage it would still remain for him to establish his pretensions. It is evident, therefore, that it is indicative of the most arrant presumption—presumption which none but a bigot could perpetrate—to assert that matter cannot perform certain operations, when we know so little of what it is really capable. Sir Charles Morgan ably confirms our comments. In the preface to his "Philosophy of Morals," p. 16, he remarks, "To place the credibility of a future state of existence upon a physiological necessity, is to take up a weak and a dangerous position. It is a mere *argumentum ad ignorantia*, liable to be affected by any change in the state of science; nor, indeed, can it be admitted, *as long as any one property of matter remains uninvestigated*. *In one word*, we must know all that matter *can* do before we are warranted in asserting what it *cannot* do." The illustrious Lawrence very judiciously asks, "Who knows the capabilities of matter so perfectly as to be able to say that it can see, hear, smell, taste, and feel, but cannot possibly *reflect, imagine, judge?* Who has appreciated them so *exactly* as to be able to decide that it can execute the mental functions of an elephant, a dog, or an ourang-outang, but cannot perform those of a Negro or a Hottentot?" Why is the Spiritualist so determined to account for the phenomena of mind by supposing the existence of an immaterial principle? Is it more unreasonable or more unphilosophical to assert that *matter* can think than that *nothing* can think? for that which is immaterial, as shown in our first lecture, being the opposite of that which is material, must, of necessity, be a *negation*. It appears to me to be a queer way of accounting for a thing to say that *nothing* produced it. It is tantamount to affirming that *nothing* produces *something*, a position which theologians now ignore. "Do not

misrepresent us, however," they exclaim. "We mean an immaterial *substance*." Indeed! An "immaterial substance" we have already shown in our opening address, to which I beg to refer you, is a contradiction both in terms and sense. What is immaterial cannot be substance, and what is substance cannot be immaterial. Ask what is meant by the latter word, and you are informed that it is something which is *not* matter. And yet they combine these two opposites and talk of an "*immaterial* substance,"—*i. e.*, an immaterial material, or a material immaterial.—What consummate nonsense! Manifestly does it confirm the fact, that the immaterialist cannot convey even an idea of his meaning without borrowing the language of the materialist, and in so doing he neutralizes his own position. When divines descant upon "immaterialism," I apprehend it is *immaterial* what they say. Theologians are most paradoxical logicians. When they cannot explain the *natural* causes of things they invent the *super-natural*, such as spirits, ghosts, holy ghosts, gods—words much more unintelligible than the things they endeavor to divine. Instead of modestly acknowledging their ignorance of many of Nature's resources, and waiting till further discoveries in science unravel the difficulty, they arrogantly assume that they know all about it, and peremptorily decide that she is incompetent of producing her own phenomena and must require the aid of a Spiritual agent, the qualities of which they can only describe by calling it "substance." What puerile incongruity. Why not call it Nature at once, and cease to confuse popular apprehension with "distinctions without a difference?" To admit that a result is effected by the very influence you deny does produce it, is worse than quibbling. It has been nobly said, "Let us remain in Nature, if we wish to account for the phenomena in Nature." If mental function requires an immaterial origin because its *modus operandi* is, as yet, not very clear to us, magnetism, gravitation, electricity,

biliary secretion, &c., will require a "Spiritual" cause. And to what palpable absurdities in science would not this reasoning lead? Science would be no longer science, but an interminable tissue of mysticism and assumption.

No one will deny, I presume, that the *brain* is matter; and that the brain is the seat of thought and sensation is a fact as universally admitted by physiologists as that the *heart* is the instrument of the circulation of the blood. Every part of the human economy performs some *action*. The heart for circulation—the eye for seeing—the ear for hearing—the nerves for sensation—the bones to sustain—the muscles to move—and the *brain* to *think*, since we find thought as *invariably* accompanying an action of the *brain* as motion the exertion of the muscles, or circulation the heart. If thought be not the function of brain, *what is?* It is comparatively useless if cerebration be not its province. Is it merely placed in the skull, as so much lumber, to fill up the cavity? All physiologists concede that the brain is one of the *largest* organs in the body, more liberally supplied with blood, and better protected. Do not these facts evince that it is capable of executing most important purposes, and what purpose more onerous than thought?

I may be told, however, the brain does not think itself. It is only the *organ* through which something else thinks. It is high time this threadbare fallacy was exploded. It has been too long employed as a mere cloak to conceal the naked truth. Had it not been for what are termed "public prejudices," it would have been repudiated long ago. This cloak is now too far worn to be of any use. People see through it. They *know* it is a disguise. Quackery in science is the most unpardonable phase of popular imposture. Proud, indeed, am I to observe that the prime minds both in phrenological and physiological philosophy, have disowned it as a sham unworthy of the age. Having minds too great and noble to be fettered by

vulgar prejudice, they have declared the *truth*, "without mystery, mixture of error, or fear of man." In the phrenological world the more eminent advocates of the materialist school are Dr. Englede and Dr. Elliotson. The former gentleman, in the most remarkable address in the English language, boldly and manfully tells his brother phrenologists, "It has appeared to us that the very first axiom of our science is erroneous. 'The brain is the organ of the mind.' This is mere assumption. We boast that our science is purely inductive, and yet, in the enumeration of our axioms, we assume a position all our facts tend to disprove. To evade the charge of materialism, we content ourselves with stating that the immaterial makes use of the material to show forth its powers. What is the result of this? We have the man of theory, and believer in spiritualism, quarrelling with the man of fact and supporter of material doctrines. We have two parties: the one asserting that man possesses a spirit superadded to, but not inherent in, brain—added to it, yet having no connection with it—producing material changes, yet immaterial—destitute of any of the known properties of matter—in fact, an *immaterial something*, which in one word means *nothing*, producing all the cerebral functions of man, yet not localized, not susceptible of proof; the other party contending that the belief in spiritualism fetters and ties down physiological investigation—that man's intellect is prostrated by the domination of metaphysical speculation—that we have no evidence of the existence of an essence, and that organized matter is all that is requisite to produce the multitudinous manifestations of human and brute cerebration. We rank ourselves with the second party, and conceive we must cease speaking of 'the mind,' and discontinue enlisting in our investigations a spiritual essence, the existence of which cannot be proved, but which tends to mystify and perplex a question sufficiently clear, if we confine ourselves to the consideration of organized matter—its forms—its changes

—and its aberrations from normal structure. Consult physiological writers, and we find that they are perfectly satisfied that the seat of mental operations is the brain, and no other organ; yet they contend that nothing more has been proved than this: that the brain, by its peculiar organism, is the instrument by which the mind acts. They introduce us to a phantom—they call forth a spirit, and without the shadow of a proof, state it guards, governs, and directs material movements. We contend that mind has no existence—that we have to consider matter only. What is organized matter? Merely a collection of atoms possessing certain properties, and assuming different and determinate forms. What is brain? Merely one kind of organized matter. What do we mean by cerebration? The function of the brain—one of the manifestations of animal life, resulting from a peculiar combination of matter. The varied changes of form which this matter assumes give rise to the numerous manifestations of cerebration in the different tribes of beings, and the varied changes of cerebration in the same being originate in molecular alterations, merely other expressions of a new condition.” Amongst the physiologists we may name the able authors of “Philosophy of Life,” and “Lectures on Man.” Sir Charles, more than twenty years ago, called on Dr. Rennell to explain what he meant by taking it for granted that the brain does not think itself, but is only the instrument of thought. He asks “How a being can use an external agent to do that which is an *inherent property of itself to perform?*” Lawrence shows that when a medical man observes any particular disease—consumption, asthma, jaundice, &c.,—he does not attribute this to any *immaterial* essence separate from the bodily organs of man, but immediately applies a remedy to the *bodily* organ itself in which the disease is seated—if consumption, to the lungs; jaundice, to the liver, &c. Why then suppose the existence of something separate from the brain when *thought* is diseased? To talk, my

friends, of the brain not thinking itself, but being only the *organ* through which something else thinks, is as monstrous as to affirm that the stomach does not digest itself—it is only the “*organ*” through which something else digests; the liver does not secrete bile itself, it is only the medium through which something else performs the function. How long is a fallacy so transparent to be tolerated? It is truly humiliating to see so many of the faculty pandering to this fraud. Physiology, more than any other science, completely explodes the assumptions of clerical dogmatism. It is deeply to be deplored, therefore, that medical men should allow a science so peculiarly their own to be prostituted so silently and tacitly at the shrine of popular superstition.

That the brain *per se* exercises the function of sensation and volition, and is not merely the organ of thought, is demonstrable by innumerable anatomical and physiological facts which I shall have the pleasure to submit to you in our next lecture. I may remark here that Dr. Stuart Wilkinson, whose premature death a few months ago is greatly to be lamented, states, in his lectures at the Manchester Mechanics’ Institution, that “the brain smells, the brain sees, and tastes. To prove this we need only cut the nerve of feeling through, and the connection with the brain would be severed—*we should not feel anything.*” Thus all sensation is annihilated in an instant by destroying a small figment of flesh—*matter*. If sensation, mind, consciousness, &c., be “immaterial, and independent,” why should all feeling be lost when a purely *physical* communication is destroyed? The human brain is composed of white and grey matter: the latter performs the function of thought. Dr. Wilkinson very admirably observes, “When this grey matter was examined by the microscope, it was found to abound in little globules, some of them of a spherical form. These globules varied in size from a thousandth, to the eighth or tenth thousandth part of an inch. To one

end of each of these there was attached a fibre which conveyed intelligence of sensations to the brain, and a fibre which carried out orders from it." He concludes, "It might seem strange to localize the intellect in little globules, but such was the case, and such the views propounded by the very latest German physiologists, and he had himself taken the trouble to ratify their views and observations, *and he had found them true.*" Mind, I hold, is no more a distinct entity from brain than digestion from the stomach, or secretion from the bile; and to affirm that man will continue to think when the brain is dissolved, is equally as preposterous as to assert that we could digest when the stomach was gone, or circulate blood when the heart was decomposed. Physiology settles the "great fact" that thought, or, to use the more correct term, *cerebration*, is nothing more than the *action* of particles of matter organized in a particular manner, and according to the conformation and development of those particles, so is mental power and capacity.

The spiritualist endeavors to establish his position that the brain is only the *organ* through which an immaterial essence executes the mental functions, by the following analogy: "The mind employs the brain as its agent, in the same manner as the musician uses his instrument. If the instrument be out of repair, the player cannot produce those harmonious combinations of sound which he could educe when in a proper condition. So the mind cannot manifest itself when the brain is disordered, though the mind itself is not affected." This may seem very plausible to the superficial observer, but to the practical anatomist it is supremely ridiculous. The analogy is wretched. There is not the slightest parallel between the musician and the mind, taking the theologian's own definition, inasmuch as the one is material and the other "spiritual." It cannot be inferred because one *material* entity uses another material entity as its instrument, that an "*immaterial essence*" should do the same.

To render the analogy fair, the theologian must either suppose the musician immaterial or the mind material. The former supposition would be contrary to the evidence of our senses; the latter would imply materialism. In either case our divines are in a dilemma. Further; the musical instrument is a production of *art*, the brain a development of *nature*. The one is inanimate, and, consequently, destitute of internal energies—the latter animate, and, therefore, capable of action from its own inherent vitality. The analogy, indeed, if valid, is suicidal. The immaterialists themselves aver that the *mind* of man, or “spirit,” only will exist in a future state. If, therefore, the brain is necessary, as the “organ” of the mind to manifest its function, how can it manifest itself in heaven, where its agent will not appear? “I guess,” as the Yankee has it, “it would be in a pretty considerable fix.” Equally ridiculous would it be to imagine that the musician would continue to play when his instrument was taken from him, as the mind could continue to think when the brain had gone “the way of all flesh.” Either the mind is independent of matter, or it is not. If it be independent, this boasted analogy must be abandoned, as no “disease of the brain” could derange its operations. If dependent on matter, it necessarily becomes amenable to the great law of the material world—*change*, and therefore cannot retain its consciousness and personality. Thus the whole doctrine of Immortality falls to the ground. There is another view of this esteemed analogy which it is necessary to notice. To employ the brain as its agent, the mind must come in *contact* with it. To effect this, it must have *parts*. But it cannot have parts if it be immaterial. This divines themselves propound. Consequently, the “spiritual” mind cannot use the brain merely as its instrument. The philosophy of materialism alone supplies a rational and congruous explanation of the phenomena of thought—*i. e.*, that the brain thinks *per se* from its inherent energies alone.

In opposition to materialism, many arguments have been urged, highly popular among divines and metaphysicians. We shall notice the more prominent. It is stated that "the particles of matter which compose the human body are entirely changed every seven or eight years, and therefore, if the thinking principle in man was material, it must likewise change and pass away with the particles thrown off, and thus all power of thinking, and all remembrance of events occurring in early life, would be lost. But we know all power of thinking is not lost, and that individuals who attain an advanced age can recollect events which transpired in their childhood. Therefore the mind must be immaterial and independent." I reply, that if it follows because the particles of matter which compose the brain change during a certain period, that therefore all power of thought or volition is obliterated, it must also be inferred, by the same rule, that because the particles of matter which compose the muscles change in a given time, that therefore all power of locomotion is lost; or because the particles which compose the stomach change, that consequently all power of digestion would be gone. But is such the fact? Do we cease walking or digesting at the end of seven years? I know that I can walk or digest as well at this moment as I could seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years ago—probably better. It is clearly a fallacy, therefore, to conclude that because an entire change occurs in the substance composing any given faculty, that the *function* of that faculty is destroyed. It is an acknowledged fact in physiological and medical science that the particles of matter gradually admitted into the system, *insensibly acquire the same properties as those thrown off*. If this was not the case, man would suffer in the space of a few years an entire deprivation not merely of his mental powers, but of all the senses of the body. He would lose his sight, hearing, speech, feeling, consciousness—in a word, he would literally die out the first seven years. If it follows that the thinking

faculty must be immaterial and independent because we do not lose the use of it, it is equally deducible that the eye, ear, tongue, nerves, palate, hands, fingers, legs, &c., are "immaterial," because we do not lose the use of *them*! So much for this fashionable sophism —a sophism that can alone be palmed upon those ignorant of the simplest principles of modern science. Connected with this subject, it has been maintained that seeing the particles of matter which constitute a human being are not *annihilated*, mind is not annihilated. These objectors forget that though there is not annihilation, an entire *dissolution* takes place, and with it all *identity* ceases. If *that* continued, our immortality would be established; but inasmuch as *personality* is "annihilated," immortality is impossible. To infer that because the particles of matter which compose a human being *as such*, perform certain functions, that they will continue those functions when absorbed by other elements, and necessarily differently organized, is a violation of every acknowledged principle of natural philosophy. It might as well be maintained that the particles of matter which compose the stomach will continue, after dissolution, to exercise that function though compounded with animal or vegetable substances more or less heterogeneous. The moment *identity* is lost in any object *as such*, it ceases to exist. Matter, as *matter*, is eternal; but any specific *form* of matter, whether in the shape of a human being or an acorn, lives *as such* but for a given epoch, and then *as such* is annihilated. Hence the grand fallacy of the doctrine we are combatting.

Another position of the anti-materialist is that the mind is *indivisible*—*i. e.*, cannot be divided into parts like matter, and hence must be immaterial and eternal. I beg to demur to the premises of this argument. What the Spiritualists call "mind" is *not* indivisible. How is it in imperfect sleep? *Part* of the mental faculties are dormant while others remain awake. If mind was

indivisible it would be impossible for *part* to remain quiescent and another active. *All* the mental powers must be perfectly awake or perfectly asleep. Again, in *insanity* it frequently happens that only *some* of the faculties are diseased, the rest continuing their legitimate action. In the most desperate cases the patient will be sane upon some points. This I hold to be utterly impossible, if "mind" was "indivisible." We reserve our facts upon this subject for a subsequent occasion.

As a triumphant proof that mind exists independently of matter, it is alleged that in many cases of a disease of the body, the mind remains unimpaired. Were these "spiritual" controversialists familiar with the ordinary facts of human physiology, they would surely know that it is quite possible for one organ of the system to remain vigorous while another is diseased, no immediate connection or sympathy subsisting between the two. If the *brain* remain healthy, the "mind" would continue its manifestations with little interruption, though the individual might be irremediably disordered in the lungs, liver, heart, &c. But let the *brain* be diseased, and we should soon discover lamentable evidences of the fallacy of the doctrine that the mind exists "independently of matter." Dr. Elliotson observes, very ably, "The argument of Bishop Butler that the soul is immortal and independent of matter, because in fatal diseases the mind often remains vigorous to the last, is *perfectly groundless*, for any function will remain vigorous to the last, if the organ which performs it is not the seat of the disease, nor much connected by sympathy or in other modes with the organ which is the *seat* of the disease. The stomach often calls regularly for food, and digests it vigorously, while the lungs are almost entirely consumed by ulceration. All the cases that are adduced to prove the little dependence of the mind upon the brain are adduced in opposition to the *myriads* of others that

daily occur in the usual course of nature, and are evidently regarded as extraordinary by those who bring them forward."

In a series of lectures delivered against "Infidelity," by able clergymen of the metropolis, it is urged that, "It is undoubtedly possible for mind or intelligence to exist independently of matter, because such is the case in the person of Deity. His mind acts in absolute independence of all that is material." This is merely establishing one assumption by another. I defy the spiritualist to demonstrate that intelligence in *any* being can manifest itself except through *organization*. It is begging the question to assume that intelligence in man must be independent of matter because it is independent in God, since it has yet to be proved that divine intelligence *is* endowed with such an attribute. Even the *existence* of such a power is still undemonstrated.

A similar assumption is introduced in the popular position, that "all intelligence proceeds from divinity, and must, therefore, be immaterial and immortal." Before we accept the *conclusion* of this argument, the *premises* must be clearly and satisfactorily established. If intelligence be a divine emanation, how is it that it should lead mankind to think and act so differently? Being of the same divine nature in all, it should produce the same effects in all. No, say the spiritualists; the *medium* through which intelligence develops itself is not the same in all, and therefore the effects cannot be the same. Ah! Indeed! Here, Mr. Anti-materialist, you are caught in your own net. You tell me that intelligence, or mind, is *superior* to matter—*i. e.*, *independent* of it; and yet you assert it is *modified* by matter—*dependent* upon the material agent through which it manifests itself, as to what shall be the effects produced by it! When shall we have done with the inconsistencies of the spiritual logician?

It is further affirmed, that all *immaterial* forms are *necessarily* immortal. I reply, let it first be shown

that immaterial forms *exist* before you predicate their immortality. I deny the possibility of such a thing. I deny that man can even form an idea of immateriality. If he conceives an idea at all, it is of something *material*. Immateriality, we have repeatedly shown, is the mere *negation of ideas*. Conceding that immateriality implied immortality, does the spiritualist know the dilemma in which this assumption involves him? Let us listen to Sir Charles Morgan: "Immateriality is assumed in order to arrive at immortality. But if all immaterial forms are immortal, then the *eternity* of the soul, *a parte priori*, follows of necessity; and thus the doctrine of an immaterial soul *subverts*, instead of *upholds*, the doctrine of our subordination to an omnipotent creator. On all hands, we have doubts, contradictions, and absurdities."

We are asked a question which the immaterialist flatters himself ought to silence forever his sceptical opponent. "Can we *weigh* a thought? Can we measure it? How long is it? How thick is it? What color is it?" &c. I reply, let a thought be shown to me *separate* from brain—organization—and *then* I will weigh it, measure it, and supply "a full and particular account" of it. It must first be proved that "thought," "mind," "intelligence," &c., are distinct and independent *entities*. And here lies the fallacy of this popular sophism. Thought, intelligence, &c., are not *beings*, but simply *conditions* of being. To ask me can I weigh a thought, &c., is as ridiculous as to require me to supply a pound of attraction, an ounce of distension, or a grain of repulsion. Repulsion, attraction, distension, mind, thought, intelligence, &c., are all mere terms expressive only of some *action* of matter, organized or unorganized. They are not separate and independent entities, and to reason upon them as such is a gratuitous and unmitigated absurdity. I can weigh BRAIN, measure it, find its length, breadth, thickness, specific gravity, color, &c., and this is all that is required. When the theologian can show me mind

*without* brain, I will answer his question. In the interim, let him answer *mine*. The attempt to separate the properties of a thing from the thing itself is only endeavoring to *separate itself from itself*—an inconceivable contradiction and impossibility. No less absurd would it be to talk of weighing digestion separate from the stomach, or secretion separate from the bile.

“Matter can understand nothing,” it is again reiterated by the same orator. Indeed! I should like to know what *he* would understand without his brain? Take away *that* matter, and I apprehend it would “matter” little what he said. I should like to hear what the “spirit” would have to say when the organization was gone. Such a phenomenon would constitute the *eighth* “wonder of the world.” *That* evidence would settle all doubt and scepticism forever.

It is held that “man must have an Immortal Soul separate from the body and peculiar to the human race, because he is always *in a state of improvement*. He is a *progressive animal*.” I ask, respectfully, what connection is there between the premises and the conclusion of this argument? I question that it follows as a legitimate sequence, because man improves generation after generation, that therefore mind will exist after the body is decomposed. I might, with equal propriety, reason that man must have an immortal soul because he walks erect, or, to use Plato’s definition of a human being, because he is a “two-legged, featherless animal.” Because man improves in intelligence while *living*, is that any testimony that he will be conscious of his intelligence when *dead*? The progression of man is only an indication of the advantages man enjoys over other animals by way of speech and writing. He has the power of speech in a high degree of perfection. He possesses also hands and fingers. By their help he is enabled to form characters to represent his ideas, and convey them to his fellow-creatures. This no other animal can do. Hence the knowledge

of each generation of *men* remains recorded for the next to improve upon, while the knowledge of each generation of *brutes* dies with them. The fact, therefore, that man being "always in a state of improvement," is not owing, as assumed by the immaterialist, to his possessing a "spirit," but *physical* organs of which other animals are deprived, or possess only in an inferior degree.

Many theologians are of opinion that *dreams* afford incontestable evidence that mind is independent of the body. I conceive that the incongruity of our dreams is by no means calculated to confirm such a view. Those who rely on this argument labor under the vulgar misapprehension that the *whole* of the faculties of the brain are dormant during dreams. Dr. Macnish, in his "Philosophy of Sleep," however, beautifully shows that dreams solely arise in consequence of *part* of those cerebral organs remaining *active*. Take away those material agents—destroy the *brain*—and what sort of dreams would you enjoy *then*? If mind be *independent* of matter, we ought to dream as readily *without* a brain as with one. Did you ever hear of a human being indulging in "nocturnal visions" *minus* that organ? If you did, by all means exhibit him in Leicester Square or the Crystal Palace. It will be the greatest "hit" of the season. I should be disposed to affirm that those who seek to prove by dreams the existence of immortal attributes in man are themselves *dreaming*, and the sooner they awake from their illusion, and contemplate "things as they are," the better for themselves and those within their influence.

I must now draw our discourse to a close by confirming the notions propounded to you on this occasion. I regret that time will only admit of my quoting a word or two. Dr. Priestly, more elaborately cited in our first lecture, says, "If the operations ascribed to mind *may* result from the powers of *matter*, why should we suppose a being which is useless, and which solves no difficulty? *It is easy to see that the properties of*

*matter do not exclude those of intelligence*, but it cannot be imagined how a being which has no properties besides intelligence, can make use of matter." The famous metaphysician, Locke, who is claimed by the Christians as one of their faith, also admits, in his "Reply to the Bishop of Worcester," that "*for anything we know to the contrary*, matter may have the property of *thought* added to it." Dr. Dick, the popular champion of the very dogma in dispute, in his favorite work, entitled the "Philosophy of a Future State," likewise abandons the doctrine of immaterialism, as not very *safe* ground of controversy.

I could multiply my authorities much further, but my time is exhausted. I must, therefore, for the present, content myself with giving you the bold and fearless declaration of Dr. Elliotson—a man who stands at the head of his profession in this city. "No fact in nature is more evident than that in certain conditions *matter thinks*. To ascribe the properties of brain to a spirit," says he, "or something distinct from matter, is as childish as it would be to ascribe the property of gravitation, the phenomena of light, heat, electricity, or the properties of plants, to something distinct from matter. To call matter *gross*, and say it is incapable of the highest and most exquisite properties, is *untrue*. Its particles are indefinitely minute—its properties are most exquisite, as seen in the phenomena of light, electricity, galvanism, magnetism, gravitation, all acting with astonishing rapidity through the immensity of space. Grant this, say some, but still you would not be so stupid, nay, so impious, as to assert that matter can think, and will, and have a consciousness of personality. *Yes, I do assert it, for this is the fact*. There it is, there it has been, and there it will be. *All* animals will and think, and have a consciousness of personality—the *whale* and each of the animalcules, which are not larger than the three or four hundredth part of an inch. If a spirit is required for thinking and willing, and for the sense of personality, every one

of these microscopic creatures must have a spirit or a soul. *Away with such nonsense!*" Yes, I say with the honest and talented Elliotson, *away with such nonsense*. Too long has absurdity deluded, and superstition crippled, the noble powers of humanity. The time has come when men must *speak out*. Truth cries aloud for fair play. Hitherto it has been manacled by the rusty chains of priestcraft. Fortunately, however, the canker of falsehood and prejudice is rapidly crumbling them to dust. They are growing too weak to confine their sacred victim. Ere long they will moulder into oblivion, and truth, glorious truth, will wing its way to the minds and hearts of men!

## LECTURE FIFTH.

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### FACTS FROM ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY IN RELATION TO MATERIALISM.

FRIENDS—

I proceed this evening to submit to you, in further confirmation of the truth of Materialism, and consequent falsity of the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, a series of physiological and anatomical facts, striking as they are curious. I say, emphatically, FACTS. It is fortunate that the materialist can command a multiplicity and variety of such evidence. Not even a spiritualist can ignore their infallible *dicta*. Facts are not merely stubborn, they are *convincing* things. In the present discussion they are of the greatest moment. Had their testimony only been considered, this question would have been decided long ago. Creeds, dogmas, theories, in the presence of facts, vanish like mist before the sun. The daylight of practical knowledge as it dawns upon us, exposes to our view the cobwebs of prejudice upon which they have so long reposed. Their flimsy foundations become apparent. It needs only an *honest* representation of facts by the scientific minds of the age to explode forever those fashionable tenets which keep the human family in bondage, and nourish among them the seeds of sectarianism, uncharitableness, and intolerance. At no period in the history of civilization was it more necessary that they should *speak out*. Let them declare the *whole* truth, and the time will arrive when—

“Falsehood’s trade  
Will become as hateful and unprofitable  
As that of truth is now.”

The first *fact* I shall introduce to you in support of the position that matter can think—that the brain, by its own inherent energies, performs the function of thought without the necessity of any “spiritual” intervention—is, *whatever stimulates that faculty stimulates cerebration*. Why is it, if the brain does not think of itself, that when thought is produced it is *invariably* excited? When digestion takes place, we are aware, from experience, that the stomach is excited—hence we infer the stomach digests. When *thought* occurs we know the brain is excited, and yet we are *not* to infer it is the brain which thinks! How consistent! How theologians belie their own logic when it suits their purpose! Sir Astley Cooper, in his “*Lectures on Surgery and Anatomy*,” vol. i., p. 279, gives a fact which clearly shows that excitement of mind uniformly accompanies excitement of brain, establishing that mental function must be the work of organized *matter*, and not mere “spirit.” A young gentleman was brought to him who had lost a portion of his skull, just above the eyebrow. “On examining the head,” says Sir Astley, “I distinctly saw that the pulsation of the brain was regular and slow; but he became agitated by some opposition to his wishes, and directly the blood was sent with *increased force* to the brain the pulsation became frequent and violent.” The same distinguished surgeon records the circumstance of a young man who had an opening in his skull from a wound, through which he could see *an increased action in the brain* when anything occurred, even in conversation, to agitate the patient. Mr. George Combe also submits a case where the *skull-cap*, having been removed by an accident, and the brain exposed, he was enabled, by conversation, *to excite particular faculties*, and he noticed that the manifestation was always accompanied by *a peculiar movement in the portion of brain forming the cerebral organ*. What do these facts demonstrate? Do they not show beyond the possibility of dispute that the internal powers of

the brain alone occasion thought, and as the condition of that important faculty varies, so do mental manifestation? There is no *intermediate* "spirit" necessary. An inveterate opponent of materialism has exultingly said, "No anatomist has ever detected either the brain or any other portion of matter in the act of thinking or reasoning." Let this gentleman make himself acquainted with these facts, and others I shall immediately develop, and he will cease his vulgar and illiterate boasting.

The general proposition with which I set out—that excitement of brain uniformly occasions excitement of mind, is exemplified in innumerable modes in every day life. In severe headache it is painfully perceptible. We feel the pain increased by incessant study. There is a determination of blood to the sensorium, which is sure to terminate fatally, if not promptly rectified. Why should mind be thus influenced if it be "immaterial and independent"? M. Broussais, in his "History of Chronic Diseases," relates the following instance:—M. Thavernier, a captain in the army, forty-two years of age, moderately stout, but well formed, received, in the middle of the Palais Royal, in May, 1814, ninety days before his death, a letter containing bad news. Whilst perusing it he remained motionless as if thunderstruck, and the left side of his face became paralyzed, and drawn to the opposite side. He was taken to Val de Grace and attended to. At this time he had complete paralysis of the arm, thigh, and leg, of the right side, and was unable to speak. After using various remedies for more than two months he began to improve, and became so much better as to be able to stand up and to speak, although with difficulty. In this state of improvement he received another letter, said to be from his wife; he read it, and then *instantly* occurred loss of speech, general immobility, abolition of sense, and complete apoplexy. He died in three days after this attack, and on examining the head *there was found engorgement of blood in the sinuses,*

*and several abscesses were observed in the BRAIN.* Will you tell me it was not excitement and ultimate disease of the *brain* that produced death in this case, but simply the departure of a "spirit" to "another world"?

*Casual injury of the brain infallibly produces a corresponding derangement of thought.* This is another fact. A man named Jones was placed on board one of her Majesty's ships early in the late revolutionary war. While on board this vessel in the Mediterranean, he received a fall from the yard-arm, and, when picked up, was found to be insensible. The vessel soon after making Gibraltar, he was deposited in an hospital in that place, where he remained for some months, *still insensible*, and some time after he was brought from Gibraltar on board the "Dolphin" to a depot for sailors at Deptford. While at Deptford the surgeon who attended him was visited by Mr. Davy. The surgeon said to Mr. Davy, "I have a case which I think you would like to see." Mr. Davy advised his removal to St. Thomas's Hospital, to be placed under Mr. Cline. "When he was first admitted into the hospital," says Sir Astley Cooper, "I saw him lying on his back, breathing without any great difficulty; his pulse regular, &c.; his fingers working to and fro by the motion of the heart. Mr. Cline, on examining his head, found an obvious depression, and thirteen months after the accident, he was carried into the operating theatre and trephined. The depression of the bone was elevated from the skull. The operation was performed at 1 p. m., and at 4, as I was walking through the wards, I went up to the man's bedside, and was surprised to see him sitting up in his bed. He had raised himself on his pillow. I asked him if he felt any pain, and he instantly put his hand to his head. This showed that volition and sensation were returning. In four days from that time the man was able to get out of his bed, and began to converse, and in a few days more he could tell us where he came from. He recollected the circumstance of his having

been pressed and carried down to Plymouth or Falmouth, *but from that moment* to the period the operation was performed, that is, for *thirteen months*, *his mind had remained in a perfect state of oblivion*, but by removing a small portion of *bone* with the saw, he was at once restored to all the functions of the mind, and almost all the powers of his body." A small portion of bone — mere matter — crushing the brain deprived a human being of all consciousness for more than a year! How *very* "immaterial and independent" the mind is, truly! Does not this memorable case triumphantly establish materialism? Does it not conclusively prove that the brain, and the brain only exercises the function of thought? Why was it that all volition should be suspended the moment the brain was compressed? Can our immaterialists answer this query? Will they tell me that their "spiritual" mind felt the pressure too? Under those circumstances, they must admit that it is liable to *disease, injury, destruction*, and therefore cannot be immortal. On the other hand, if they hold that it was not affected by the concussion, why did it not continue its manifestations? Why did it not show its "independence" in this case? We are informed in Hennan's "Principles of Military Surgery," that a man, at the Battle of Waterloo, had his skull-bone beat in upon the brain to the depth of half an inch. This caused volition and sensation to cease, and he lay nearly in a lifeless state. The surgeon raised up the depressed portion of the bone, and then the man immediately arose, dressed himself, became perfectly rational, and recovered rapidly. Richerand, in his "Elements of Physiology," mentions the singular case of a woman whose brain was exposed in consequence of the removal of a considerable portion of its bony covering by disease. He states he *repeatedly* made pressure on it, *and each time suspended all feeling and intellect, which were instantly restored when the pressure was withdrawn*. Can anything be more demonstrative of the position of the materialist and the

great fallacy of the priesthood of the world? Again, we read in Jackson's "Principles of Medicine," that Professor Chapman, of Philadelphia, saw an individual with his skull perforated, and the brain exposed, who was accustomed to submit to the same experiment of pressure as before described, and who was exhibited by the late Professor Westar to his class. His intellectual and moral faculties disappeared *on the application of pressure to the brain*; they were held under the thumb, as it were, and restored *at pleasure* to their full activity by *discontinuing the pressure*. Dr. Conolly relates a remarkable instance of a young clergyman whose head was severely injured a few days before that upon which he ought to have been married. He recovered so far as his health was concerned, and lived until the age of eighty; *but from the time of the injury* his understanding was perfectly deranged, though he retained the recollection of his approaching marriage, talked of nothing else during his whole life, and expressed impatience for the arrival of the happy day! Dr. Abercrombie mentions the case of a man who even lost all recollection of his having a wife and children for several days after a similar accident. Facts like these, recorded by men of high respectability and talent, establish, beyond all cavil, that *the brain* thinks, or why is thought deranged, or entirely suspended, the instant the brain receives injury, and restored the moment the brain is restored?

My next *fact* suggests that when the brain is *malfomed* or *imperfect*, as in the case of *idiocy*, *thought* is imperfect. Did any one ever behold an idiot exhibit rationality or mental capacity? Can you impart intellect to such a being? Attempt to improve it and it still remains imbecile. Is not this irrefutable evidence that it is the brain which performs the mental operations of man, or why should it *invariably* happen that when that power is defective mind is defective?

*Insanity* is another *fact*. As the brain becomes dis-

EASED, *however temporarily, precisely in proportion is mental manifestation disordered.* This could not take place if the mind was immaterial and independent. Many professional men of eminence have testified to the coincidence that *organic disease of the brain always accompanies mental derangement.* This now forms one of the fundamental facts of medical science. Dr. Haslam says that insanity is *always* connected with organic alterations of the brain. Greding has observed thickening in the skull in 167 cases out of 216, besides other organic affections. Dr. Spurzheim, the famous phrenologist, states that he *invariably* found changes of structure in the heads of insane people. Mr. Davidson, surgeon to the Lancaster County Lunatic Asylum, admits that he had examined the heads of 200 patients who died in the Asylum, and "he scarcely met with a single instance in which traces of disease in the brain, or its membranes, were not evident, even when lunacy was recent, and a patient died of a different disease." M. Foville and M. Delaye, who have paid more attention perhaps than any other two morbid anatomists to this subject, state that they have always been able to detect organic changes in the brain after death, *principally in the cuticle or gray matter*, which was frequently found to be of intensely red color, resembling erysipelas. The gray part you will remember, as explained on a former occasion, is that which *thinks*. Dr. Wright, of the Bethlem Lunatic Hospital, deposes that in one hundred cases of insane individuals, whose heads he examined, *all* exhibited signs of disease, ninety out of the hundred in most unmistakeable forms.—One of the writers for the prize offered by the celebrated Esquirol for the best dissertation on insanity, assures us that he had examined the heads of more than 100 individuals who died from insanity, and comes to the following conclusions:—1st. That in the brains of those who die of insanity changes of structure will *always* be found. 2d. That these changes

are the consequences of inflammation, either acute or chronic. 3d. That there exists a correspondence between the symptoms and the organic changes, and that the names monomania, mania, &c., ought only to be employed as representing degrees and stages of inflammation of the *brain*. According to these able authors, where we observe mental derangement we must at once ascribe it to a disease of the sensorium. Theologians themselves, in *practice*, do the same, and yet they assert that it is not the brain, but some immaterial "substance" which exists independently of it, that *thinks*. How philosophically absurd and inconsistent!

*Apoplexy* affords a most painful illustration of the validity of Materialism. By the bursting of the smallest vessels of the brain the mental economy of man is forever destroyed. A single drop of blood can annihilate all consciousness or vitality in an instant.—Nevertheless, mind is "independent of matter," forsooth! Oh! when will such nonsense be exploded? When will men cease to conceal the real truth, and enslave themselves and mankind with the chains of prejudice and delusion?

*Epilepsy*, more or less severe, is almost daily experienced by thousands. Anxiety—excitement—over-exertion, mental or physical—an oppressive atmosphere—and other causes—induce a sudden rush of blood to the head, and instantly produce loss of speech, unconsciousness, &c. Can instances like these be continually presenting themselves to our sight, and rational people persist in maintaining that our mental powers act independently of matter? The truth is, our theologians insist on this gross fallacy because they are aware that if they admit the *dependency* of mind upon matter they virtually give up the controversy. They endorse Materialism by rendering the mind liable to the *laws* of matter, which laws necessarily imply *change*, *change*, *dissolution*, and with dissolution ceases all personal immortality. Thus, to

save a *dogma*, all *facts* are ignored. So has it ever been in the history of priesthood. Theology has stood in the path of science, arrogantly declaring "thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." Its dominion, is however irrevocably doomed. Truth can no longer be crushed by crowns or mitres. It is now fairly abroad amongst the people, emancipating them from their ignorance, and disencumbering them of their prejudices. Free and unfettered, man will, ere long, outgrow the credulity of his mental infancy, and superstition no longer find a place in the abodes of men.

I hold as an incontrovertible position, clearly demonstrated on a former occasion, that what is *immaterial* could not be affected by anything material, or *vice versa*. In order for an impression to be produced, there must be some point of contact between the body producing the impression and the object receiving it. Now it is admitted there cannot be a point of contact without *parts*, and there cannot be parts without *Materiality*. Therefore if I can show that *physical* causes affect cerebral action, I prove that thought is the result of *organized matter*, and the whole theory of Spiritualism falls to the ground. Let us enter upon our demonstration.

Firstly, there is the fact of *sleep*. No one will deny the existence of *this* phenomenon. And pray what is sleep? A certain condition of the *physical* or *animal* body—the torpidity of the brain. This *material* cause powerfully affects mental function. During *perfect* sleep there is an entire suspension of mind or consciousness. The individual is in a state of temporary death. How is this if the mind is *immaterial*? Are we to believe that the "spirit" is too wearied to carry on its functions, and requires rest? If so, we are bound to presume that it is liable to entire exhaustion and consequent dissolution, and thus cannot be immortal. I challenge the theologian to account for the phenomenon of sleep upon the principles of *Spiritual-*

*ism.* The Materialist, on the other hand, can afford a ready explanation. The brain becomes wearied by continued action, and gradually sinks into a state of torpor; its functions are, for a time, suspended. The result is that thought, consciousness, *mind*, is suspended. There could not be a stronger proof of the truth of Materialism than the fact—I repeat, the *fact*—that as the brain becomes torpid, the mind becomes torpid, and *vice versa*.

*Dreams* afford additional confirmation. To what are these singular phenomena owing? Simply to *some* of the faculties of the brain only being dormant. When a person is dreaming, he is in a state of *imperfect* sleep. This enables us to account for the circumstance of dreams generally being so incongruous and fantastic. People often laugh at their nocturnal visions, and wonder how it were possible for such preposterous concatenation of ideas to have taken place. If the mind is immaterial and independent, *how could it have been thus disordered and confused*, and that, too, by a mere *physical* condition? It often happens that material influences of an apparently trivial character affect mental phenomena by way of dreams. Dr. Abercrombie informs us that Dr. Gregory, who had been recently reading an account of Hudson's Bay, dreamt one night that he spent a winter in that part of the world, and suffered intensely from frost, and upon awaking he found he had thrown off his bed clothes during sleep. Heat, arising from an accumulation of clothes, may lead to a dream of an opposite character. The same Dr. Gregory, having applied a bottle of hot water to his feet one night, in consequence of indisposition, dreamt that he was walking up Mount *Ætna*, and felt the ground under him warm. Dr. Reid, having one night a blister applied to his head, dreamed that he was scalped by a party of Indians—not a very pleasant dream, certainly. These facts, I say *facts*, demonstrate the utter absurdity of supposing the mind immaterial and indepen-

dent of physical causes, when such trivial material circumstances powerfully affect it.

*Intoxication* illustrates the truth that cerebration is influenced *by*, and dependent *upon*, physical agencies. How is it, if mind is spiritual and independent, it should become so highly excited by partaking of alcohol—mere *diluted matter*? I maintain, if that doctrine be well founded, it could not be disturbed, however deeply an individual might drink. But we know it *is* affected most lamentably. *Inebriation* affords the same proof in favor of Materialism as *insanity*, the only difference being that the brain, in one case, is diseased for a brief interval only. I look upon the drunkard as an *insane* man for the time being. In both cases the *brain* is affected, *and in both cases there is a disorder of the "mind."* Does not this, I again ask, show that the mind and brain are not too distinct entities, but one is the mere function of the other?

*Fever* and other diseases display how powerfully some *physical* disorders influence intellectual development. Dr. Rush, of the United States, mentions that many of the old Germans and Swiss in Pennsylvania, who had not spoken their native tongue for forty or fifty years, and who had probably forgotten it, would often use it in fevers. The stimulus of the fever in their *brain*, he explains, revived the recollection.—*Why* should it do so if the brain, *per se*, did not perform the act of thinking? Why did not the "immaterial essence," if so *very* "independent," remember those things without the stimulus of inflamed *matter*? The same physician states the case of an Italian who was master of the Italian, French, and English languages, but who, in a fever which terminated his life, spoke English at the commencement of his disease, French only in the middle, and, on the day of his death, Italian! Fever, especially of the brain, is most prevalent in those countries where that material faculty is most liable to over-exertion. Esquirol,

and other celebrated physiologists who have carefully studied these subjects, record that in China there is very little insanity. So, likewise, in Turkey. It is also very uncommon in Spain and Russia, at least out of the large cities. In France, there is much less in the country than in the cities. Humboldt states he saw very few cases of mental derangement amongst the American aborigines. In England the brain, and, I am afraid, the *pocket*, too, is more over-taxed than in any other country in the world. And what is the result? *More insanity.* Does not this coincidence singularly corroborate the view, that the brain, *and nothing else*, thinks? When considered in detail, some curious facts are elicited. The registers of France indicate that the insane of the educated classes consist principally of priests, poets, musicians, &c., the very parties who are most apt to over-exert the brain by excitement, whilst few instances of the disease occur amongst naturalists, physicians, geometers, chemists, and those philosophers who are less imaginative and impassioned. The brain, like any other faculty of the human system, when unduly excited, will soon run itself out. Clearly is this seen in the following interesting table, containing an account of the relative mortality of illustrious men. The more exciting studies evidently exhaust the system quickest.

Tasso, 51; Virgil, 52; Shakspeare, 52; Moliere, 53; Samuel Clarke, 54; Grey, 55; Pope, 56; Dante, 56; Ovid, 57; Horace, 57; Mosheim, 61; Paley, 62; Scott, 62; Boyle, 64; Hume, 65; Bacon, 65; Milton, 66; Mackintosh, 67; Adam Smith, 67; D'Alembert, 67; Copernicus, 70; Gall, 70; La Sage, 70; Seneca, 71; Diderot, 71; Robertson, 72; Confucius, 73; Locke, 73; Dugald Stewart, 73; Jenner, 74; Johnson, 74; Euler, 77; LaPlace, 78; Galileo, 78; Galen, 79; Kant, 80; Harvey, 80; Rollin, 80; Buffon, 81; Plato, 81; Herschell, 84; Bentham, 84; Franklin, 84; Newton, 85; Mirabeau, 86; Hobbes, 91; Wren, 91; Hut-

ton, 92; Ferguson, 93; Isocrates, 98; Zeno, 98; Hippocrates, 109. Cerebration is amenable to the same *physical* law which regulates all animated nature—that premature or undue development induces early and sudden dissolution. If subject to *material* laws at all, I hold the fallacy of Immaterialism to be incontestable.

*Medical treatment* itself is corroborative of the Materialist's philosophy. *Practically*, the Spiritualist admits that which in *theory* he denies. What does he do in cases of mental derangement, as in fevers, &c.? Does he put his trust in *Spiritual* remedies? No, indeed. He flies immediately to *physical* applications. His faith is placed in the *doctor* rather than the *priest*, in *physic* rather than *prayers*. Suppose a theologian—let him be a Bishop, if you will—had an affectionate child ill of a fever, and its mind raving. A brother Bishop steps in, and he consults him as to what he should do. “Shall I send for my family physician?” “Brother! you astonish me,” would answer the *consistent* divine. “Apply no such *carnal* remedy. Fall upon your knees, or read one of your most pious sermons.” How the *father* would look at the *Bishop*, and wish him and his prayers in the clutches of their old rival! He would certainly esteem him mad, or callous to all sympathy. Professor Lawrence has admirably observed, with that refined sarcasm no less crushing than characteristic, “The effect of mental treatment completely corroborates these views. Indeed they who talk of, and believe in, diseases of the mind, are too *wise* to put their trust in *mental* remedies. Arguments, syllogisms, discourses, sermons, have never *yet* restored *any* patient—the moral pharmacopœia is quite inefficient, and no real benefit can be conferred without vigorous medical treatment.”

TEMPERAMENT is another *physical* cause influencing cerebral function. Upon the temperament of an individual depends the *quality* of brain, and the animal

system generally. All physiologists well know how dependent is mental manifestation upon this *material* condition. In the person of a *lymphatic* temperament the vital actions are languid, the pulse feeble, and the whole frame indicates slowness and weakness in the various functions especially the *cerebrum*. What is the result? A corresponding sluggishness of mind. An individual of the *sanguine* temperament, on the other hand, possesses greater activity in the animal system; the pulse is stronger, fuller, and more frequent. As a necessary sequence, *brain* is more energetic. One of the *bilious* temperament, is likewise endowed with great energy in the animal functions, but much more *strength* and *durability* in the nervous system. What follows? A similar character of mind. A person of this temperament could endure more mental excitement, with less injury. The last of the temperaments, the *nervous*, imparts great rapidity in the muscular actions, and vivacity in the sensations. The *nervous* system of individuals so constituted preponderates extremely, and the brain is much finer and delicate. To what does this *physical* fact lead? A corresponding *quickness*, *excitability*, and *delicacy* of "mind." Do not the temperaments, therefore, illustrate that what is called "mind" is not only sensibly affected by *physical* causes, but absolutely **DEPENDENT UPON THOSE PHYSICAL CAUSES** for the quality of its powers? Matter decides whether they shall be slow or quick, feeble or energetic, dull or vivacious.

*Convalescence* confessedly affects mental development. Even an ultra-immaterialist will tell you, with the utmost complacency imaginable, that "all the *physical* laws which tend to promote the health and strength of the body, must tend also to improve the health and strength of the mind." In the same breath he declares that mind is *immaterial* and *independent*—*i. e.*, cannot be affected by "physical laws"! Inimitable consistency! How characteristic of a system of error and absurdity!

*Infancy, maturity, and old age*, also elucidate and confirm materialism. In *infancy* the body, and especially the brain, is in a weak and tender condition. We find the mind the same. In *maturity* the brain, and the animal economy in general, is in its *full vigor*. We find the mind the same. In *old age* it again becomes weak. So does the mind. Mind is developed as brain is developed. Mind is mature as brain is mature. Mind is decrepit as the brain is decrepit. Mind is *defunct* as brain is defunct. We are forced to these inferences by the facts of modern science, however unpalatable to the orthodox. Ask an immaterialist if everything in nature which grows, attains maturity, and decays, does not eventually *die*, he will answer, "Certainly, it is natural it should." Yet if you tell him that the mind grows, attains maturity, and decays, and, therefore, must ultimately *die*, he denies it, and tells you, on the contrary, with all the assurance possible, that it will live forever! To *reason* with such parties is, I am afraid, a bootless task. "Examine the mind, the grand prerogative of man. Where is the mind of the *fœtus*? Where is that of the child just born? Do we not see it built up before our eyes by the action of the five external senses, and of the gradually-developed internal faculties? Do we not trace it advancing by a slow progress through *infancy* and *childhood*, to the perfect expansion of its faculties in the *adult*, *annihilated*, for a time, by a blow upon the head, or the shedding of a little blood by *apoplexy*, decaying as the body declines in *old age*, and finally reduced to an amount hardly perceptible, when the body, worn out by the mere exercise of the organs, reaches, by the simple operation of natural decay, that state of decrepitude most aptly termed *second childhood*? Where, then, shall we find proofs of the mind's independence of the bodily structure of that mind which, like the corporeal frame, is infantile in the child, manly in the adult, sick and debilitated in disease, frenzied or melancholic in the *madman*,

enfeebled in the decline of life, doting in decrepitude, and **ANNIHILATED BY DEATH?"** *ANNIHILATED by death*, says the great physiological innovator. Well might the clergy growl at him, and, for the lack of argument, endeavor to blast his reputation by calumny and denunciation.

The *last fact* to which I solicit your attention in proof of the opinion that cerebral function is not only influenced by physical causes, but absolutely dependent upon them is, *that mental capacity is precisely in proportion to the development of brain*. Human physiology and comparative anatomy alike demonstrate, that where there is a greater volume of brain there is higher *mental* power, and *vice versa*. Every-day experience attests there is a marked difference in the intellectual power of human beings. Whence this disparity? Is it owing to some *immaterial* cause, as taught by the orthodox? Study human physiology and you will discover that it is directly ascribable to a difference in *physical* structure. The mind of the Negro and Hottentot, New Hollander and Carib, is inferior to that of an European. Why? Because their *organization is inferior*. It is a fact established by modern physiology, confirmed by *phrenological* observation, that when the frontal region of the cranium is large, mental capacity is proportionally effective. This will appear evident to you by calling to mind some of your own acquaintances who are remarkable for superior ability. Do you not see the *high, commanding* forehead, or, in those of a reverse character, the *low, shrivelled, retreating* intellect? Are not these FACTS evident to your *senses*? Comparative anatomy proves that this principle of enlargement of brain denoting enlargement of mental calibre, holds good, not in relation to *man* merely, but to all the animal creation. The chimpanzee possesses more brain, and especially in the frontal region, than any of the monkey tribe. What is the consequence? A higher development of *mental* power. He is the king of his race. Tracing the gradation of

cerebral organism through the dog to the elephant, from the elephant to the horse, and thence gradually to birds, from birds to reptiles, reptiles to fishes, and from fishes to the polypus, the same fact is evident. As we sink in *cerebral* power we retrograde in *mental* power, until, ultimately, both are *scarcely traceable*. It would be an interesting duty, were it our province in these lectures, to explain the difference observable on dissecting the brain of the various tribes of living creatures—a difference singularly confirming the point we enforce. I may state, however, that in *mammalia*—the highest class of animals, the most perfect specimen of which is man—we find the cerebral hemispheres assuming a convoluted or folded appearance, the number and depth of these convolutions increasing as we ascend from the lowest to the highest. They are, comparatively speaking, absent in the rat, mouse, and rabbit; more distinct in the whale and dolphin; still more in the camel, stag, and sheep; and very strongly marked in the tiger, cat, dog, horse, &c. The size, number, and complexity of these convolutions determine the mental power possessed by an animal. In man, the “lord of the creation,” these convolutions are larger, more numerous, compact, and complicated than any other animal. As you descend in the scale of intelligence they become less and less prominent, until you approach those creatures so low in animal form that all trace of the convolution is undistinguishable. Do not these physiological and anatomical facts beautifully elucidate the utter absurdity of referring mental phenomena to an immaterial negation? Do they not show that the slightest variation in the conformation of the *organized matter* produces a corresponding change in cerebral appearances?

Physiology lays it down, as a fundamental law, that the size and weight of brain bears a relative proportion to the intellect—irrevocably settling the important fact that mind is determined by *material*, and not *spiritual* causes. The whole theory of the priesthood, there-

fore, is based upon a vulgar error. The heaviest brain on record was that of the distinguished Cuvier—a philosopher of vast mental powers. It weighed sixty-four and a half ounces. Dr. Abercrombie, a man of extraordinary capacity, sixty-three ounces. Dr. Chalmers, the greatest mind in the theological world of recent times, fifty-three. Lord Byron, the giant of literature, fifty-eight. The *weight* of brain varies, too, with the age of the individual. So does force of mind. From one to four years the maximum weight of the human brain is forty-five ounces—the *minimum*, twenty; leaving a mean difference of twelve and a half ounces. It is gradually developed in size and weight to the age of thirty or thirty-five, and there remains for a long period stationary. As the decline of life approaches it insensibly diminishes. While the brain of a man might weigh fifty ounces at fifty or fifty-five, at seventy or eighty it would have graduated to forty-five or forty. Observation and experiment, in short, indubitably evince that superiority of mind in the animal kingdom is *exactly* commensurate with superiority of brain; that the *activity* of both are co-equal; that as long as the latter retains its natural energies mind continues, but the moment these energies cease *mind ceases*.

Unless every fact in science be ignored, I defy the spiritualist to maintain his ground. We have shown that the stimulation of brain, a blow upon the head, idiocy, insanity, apoplexy, sleep, dreams, ~~intoxication~~, fever, medical treatment, temperament, convalescence, infancy, maturity, old age, and conformation or structure of brain—all purely *physical* agencies—variously excite, suspend, derange, enfeeble, and modify mental development. Why, in the face of facts so palpable and undeniable, should it be persisted that mind is immaterial and independent? Can anything but sheer prejudice induce intelligent and thinking men to shut their eyes to such evidence? I cannot but sincerely and deliberately repudiate a dogma at variance with

testimony so conclusive and overwhelming. Surely the period is "looming in the distance" when the mass of mankind will discard the illusions of theological mysticism for the practical realities of political, moral, and social science? Men would then no longer content themselves with the mysteries around them, under the vain hope of future felicity, but put their own shoulders to the wheel of the glorious car of progress, endeavoring to make the most of the illimitable and inexhaustible resources which nature opens to us in *this* life, wisely securing that heaven *here* which priests *promise* us *hereafter*.

## LECTURE SIXTH.

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### IS THE DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE STATE ESSENTIAL TO THE MORALITY OF MANKIND?

FRIENDS—

Our theme is a grave one. Widely differing with the majority of society, I claim your kind and deliberate attention while I develop my sincere convictions upon this subject. I have not imbibed them hastily, or proclaimed them inconsiderately. Seventeen years of continued reflection, reading, observation, and discussion conduce to the belief I now avow. On this, as all other occasions since I first ascended a public platform, I shall express *all* that I think. I never have, and never will endorse that policy which declares only *half* the truth upon any question. The age of expediency in religion, as in politics, is past. Truth has grown timid and vacillating under its *regime*, and can only be restored to health, vigor, and confidence, by an undisguised and unbending advocacy of her claims. I am no tory sceptic. I cannot respect that which I discard. I have no veneration for vulgar prejudices. While maintaining the becoming dignity and courtesy of an honest inquirer, I would eschew the blandishments and trimmings of compromise. The eye of Europe is at this moment fixed upon the friends of free thought. The destiny of mental liberty is in *their* hands. Earnestly, boldly, *uncompromisingly* pursuing their path, nothing can resist them; but if they pause to exchange compliments and concede conditions, the enemy will outflank them, and, by a side

blow, crush the hand offered them in frankness and generosity. Friends of free inquiry ! rise to the greatness of your mission ! Avow it unreservedly, pursue it undeviatingly, defend it unflinchingly—having *always* in view *principle*, and not expediency, and reason and truth will soon rule the earth.

It is most plausibly urged that the doctrine of a future state, including, as it does, the question of eternal rewards and punishments, is at least useful, if it be not absolutely necessary. The moral world would be a blank without it. Universal immorality would prevail. No motive to probity would exist. In a word, society would be an arena of the vilest passions, the foulest vices, the blackest crimes. My friends, I indignantly deny the truth of this averment. I denounce it as a gross libel upon human kind—a foul indignity upon all that is just and good. None but those who are callous to the beautiful and great in human nature could support an opinion so revolting and degrading. While such sentiments find currency, and are esteemed as the *ne plus ultra* of moral worth, our morality will remain, as hitherto, a system of “organized hypocrisy”—a notorious sham—an unblushing caricature of all that is virtuous, noble, generous, and faithful. Strange mode, indeed, to develop integrity amongst the people, to tell them they are *inherently* vicious, and were it not for such dogmas as the one before us they would become the *brute* and not the *MAN*—the victim of degeneracy and not the apostle of progress ! To raise a nation to virtue, you must teach its people that the elements of that glorious attribute exist in the poorest and meanest of its children, and not that the seeds of *sin* are alone to be found, corrupting every impulse, and frustrating every aspiration. Self-reliance in virtue, as in freedom, is the only means of success.

The position that without a belief in future rewards and punishments society will become a chaos, is, I hold, contrary to fact and experience, individually and nationally speaking. If peoples, as well as persons,

can be cited, who, more or less indifferent to this belief, were nevertheless as estimable as those who enforced it, the assumption that such a creed is *essential* to morality is incontrovertibly invalidated. If individuals and communities can be found as moral *without* it as *with* it, the doctrine cannot be *necessary* to the virtue of states or of families. What says history? With no small degree of pride is it that I submit to you the following facts, which scatter to the winds the assumptions of those who would frighten men from the truth that they may the longer revel in indolence and power. In countries, the inhabitants of which are entirely ignorant of this favorite dogma, the noblest morality is to be found. In the work of D. H. Kolff, referred to in a former lecture, the following particulars are given of the natives of the Arru Islands, who have the "misfortune" to be unacquainted with this tenet. The writer observes: "Yet it is not a little remarkable that the Arafuras, notwithstanding that they have no hope of rewards or fear of punishment after death, live in brotherly peace among themselves, respect the rights of property in the fullest sense, and pay implicit obedience to the decisions of their chiefs." What say the clergy to this fact? What a glorious answer to their unwarrantable assertions! The inhabitants of the Caffraria coast, who also are in darkness upon this subject, are distinguished for their morality. Captain Benjamin Stout, in a narrative addressed to the American President, John Adams, gives a very laudatory account of the virtues of that people. Such as entertain a favorable opinion of their fellow-creatures, will here rejoice to behold the virtues of hospitality and humanity practised by men termed *savages* by their oppressors, *but who put civilized society to the blush by their conduct*; and although unconscious of the existence even of Deity, afford a lesson to the most enlightened of the Christian nations. Our Christian communities would do well to imitate the simple excellencies of a people who can afford to be moral without the

spurs of heaven or hell. China affords a striking proof of the absurdity of the opinion that morality would be extinguished without fire and brimstone. Let me remind you of the words of the author of the "Philosophy of History." "It is quite true," says he, "that the *laws* of China do not speak of rewards and punishments after death; they would not venture to affirm that of which they know nothing. The doctrine of a hell was *useful*, but the *government* of China would never admit it. They believe that a strict attention to, and a constant restraint held over, the manners and habits of the people, would have more effect than opinions which may be disputed, and that the people would live in greater fear of the law always *present* than a law to *come*." This is sound ethics; and who will affirm that there is less morality in China, the most populous empire in the world, than in Europe? What European nation will excel them? Do you not remember the recent Chinese war? How did it originate? In the attempt, on the part of the Chinese government, to protect their population from the demoralizing, not to say poisonous, drugs of the English. We behold one nation who boasts of its admiration of the doctrine of a future state, insisting upon vitiating a whole empire; and another nation, indifferent to that dogma, nobly resisting an attempt so infamous and demoralizing. Who were the most moral? Who the most worthy of imitation? This fact is alone adequate to explode the stupid idea that without a hope of heaven or fear of hell no inducement to virtue would remain amongst us.

Take a few personal cases. Look to the character of those who ignored this dogma, or were more or less indifferent to it. Where will you find men more eminent for their acquirements, patriotism, philanthropy, or morality, than Epicurus, Porphyry, Sydney, Neville, Harrington, Sir W. Temple, Halley, Collins, Hume, Adam Smith, Gibbon, Hobbes, Franklin, Paine, Barlow, Washington, Jefferson, Abner Kneeland,

Darwin, Day, Burdon, Hollis, Bentham, Montesquieu, D'Holbach, Diderot, D'Alembert, Helvetius, Turgot, Condorcet, Volney, Lalande, Laplace, Say, Robert Owen, and Robert Dale Owen? These great and noble men did not require a heaven or a hell as an incentive to their virtues and utility. They pursued the path of moral worth from the pure conviction that it was due to their own self-respect, and the progress and happiness of society at large, and not because if they did not they might expect "eternal damnation."

In ordinary society, at the present moment, amongst the mass of the artizans, who are the *ablest* workmen? Who the most *sober*? Who those upon whom an employer can place reliance at periods of difficulty and urgency? The acute, thinking, steady, intelligent sceptic, who has "a mind of his own." I *know* this is true. My long and incessant intercourse with the leading workmen of large establishments throughout the empire, warrant me in making this important statement. A few years ago, during the great socialist agitation in England, one of the largest machine and engineer establishments in Manchester, was visited by one of those dastardly emissaries of the clergy, John Brindley, with the *laudable* and *pious* object of urging the principals to dismiss from their employ all socialists or freethinkers. One of the firm promptly replied, that if they took his advice they would lose the right arm of their establishment, and might as well close at once. If answered with equal candor by the many firms waited upon by this "parson's scavenger," he would meet with the same rebuff. Who are the most active in mechanics' institutions, popular libraries and reading rooms, temperance societies, and other kindred institutions? The thoughtful, reading, inquiring sceptic. In agricultural districts, who is the man "looked up to" by his fellow-laborers in all village councils? He who dares to walk by the vicar without pulling off his hat! Who are the individuals selected by the working classes themselves to manage their "co-operative

stores," tailoring, hatting, baking, weaving, printing "associations," &c.? The busy, active, devoted sceptic. Who is to be seen in an evening, not in our "casinos" with his "mistress," or the pot-house with his cards, but at his own fireside, studying D' Holbach's "System of Nature," Paine's "Rights of Man" and "Age of Reason," Robert Owen's "Five Facts" and "Essay on the Formation of Character," or attending and organizing public meetings to obtain the rights of the people, or expose those great social and ecclesiastical abuses of the age which lie at the source of the misery, slavery, and ignorance of the world? Who? The patriotic, persevering, and courageous sceptic. If *character* is to be taken as a test of *opinion*, I am prepared at any time, in any place, to discuss the merits of Christianity and free inquiry by the *conduct* of those who profess them. Let this challenge be accepted, or the clergy, established and dissentient, cease fulminating from their pulpits their atrocious calumnies against those who are too independent to be their tools, and sufficiently honest to tell them so.

That the doctrine of a future state, or any other mere dogma, is not indispensable to the morality of mankind, can be proved from the admission of one of the most popular divines of modern times—Dr. Chalmers. In a series of sermons delivered in the "Tron Church," Glasgow, this extraordinary man says:—"Now conceive for a moment that the belief of a God were to be altogether expunged from the world, we have no doubt that society would suffer most painfully in its temporal interests by such an event. But the machine of society might still be kept up; and on the face of it you might still meet with the same gradations of character and the same varied distribution of praise, among individuals who compose it. Suppose it possible that the world could be broken off from the system of God's administration altogether, and that he were to consign it, with all its present accommodations, and all its natural principles, to some

far and solitary place beyond the limits of his economy, we should still find ourselves in the midst of a moral society of character; and man, sitting in judgment over it, would say of some that they are good, and of others that they are evil. Even in this desolate region of Atheism, the eye of the sentimentalist might expatriate among beauteous and interesting spectacles, amiable mothers shedding their graceful tears over the tomb of departed infancy; high-toned integrity maintaining itself unalloyed amid the allurements of corruption; benevolence plying its labors of usefulness, and patriotism earning its proud reward in the testimony of an approving people. Here, then, you have compassion, and natural affection, and justice, and public spirit." This memorable admission, by one who stands in the front rank of theologians, ought to have its full weight with those who are continually preaching that an individual must be a "human monster" who will not subscribe to their religious tenets.

Surely if the position of the theologian is true, that without the philosophy of a future state no order could be maintained in society, we may fairly presume that in those nations where this doctrine is the most admired, the greatest morality will prevail. Is such the case? No. On the contrary, it is notorious that some of the most *religious* nations in the world are the *most immoral*. Look at our own country, where there are more churches, chapels, Bibles, and priests, than in any other nation upon the face of the globe. Though we boast of the splendor of our churches, and the plenitude of our Bibles, we are compelled to complain of the alarming prevalence of crime and demoralization. Coexistent with an inordinate religious profession, we behold an indescribable amount of human suffering and human wickedness. Cotemporaneous with a multitudinous and princely priesthood, we discover an equally numerous and opulent police. In short, society in England, at the present time, is a paradoxical admixture of Bibles and blunderbusses—prayers

and revelries—pulpits and beer-shops—churches and poor-houses—altars and prisons—*black*-coated soul-curers—red-coated body-destroyers. Fox, the Quaker, alluding to standing armies, quaintly observes—“We have an army of lawyers, with tough parchments and interminable words, to confound honesty and common sense—an army of paper to fight gold—an army of soldiers to fight the French—an army of doctors to fight death—and *an army of persons to fight the devil.*” My friends, in the midst of such anomalies we are told that a belief in these dogmas is the only *preventive* of their contemporaries, sin and wickedness. Contemplating the present distracted and vitiated state of society, the pious reformer is always exclaiming—“Oh! we must have more churches and chapels wherein to invite our degraded brethren! We must have more Bibles, more missionaries, wherewith to convert them. Let the people read their Bibles and pray to God, and they will soon receive consolation and assistance. They will require no other support. All other schemes of reformation are *carnal*—for the ‘flesh.’ It is the necessities of the *soul* that must be attended to.” Now what does all this mean? I wish not wantonly to irritate the honest prejudice of any person, much less impugn the sincerity of their professions; but certainly, if there is one thing more than another which I heartily despise, it is *oily* cant and *wily* hypocrisy. Under the black garb of piety and godliness is to be found, on no few occasions, much that is mean and selfish. Nay, it is generally in such a dress that this spirit clothes itself. Assuming to sanctify, it conceives its sincerity will be unquestioned. Professing religion, it considers its practices will pass unimpeached. But what, I ask, is the meaning of such language? Simply this. Let the people be *cajoled* into the notion that sin is hereditary, poverty a *blessing*—that a poor man is the noblest sight in the eyes of God—that he who is perishing through want has an infinitely greater chance of entering the pre-

cincts of Heaven than one bloated with superfluity—in fine, let the people only be coaxed into the notion that the best passport to everlasting bliss is a certificate from the parish officer—the sure test of celestial respectability, rags and wretchedness, poverty and starvation, and then we shall hear no more of the “vulgar” cry for liberty and reform. The tender nerves of aristocratic saints will no longer be shocked with the blasphemous acclamation of “justice, equality, and fraternity.” Only let the “vile rabble” be deluded into such very proper and becoming notions, and then the “powers that be,” lay and clerical, will take the flattering unction to their souls that the “mob,” instead of manfully insisting upon such being done to them, and organizing themselves for obtaining their rights as citizens and men, will go quietly to their homes, and, falling upon their knees, thank God that they are not in a worse position than they are.

Not only is the truth confirmed that some of the most *religious* nations in the world are the most *immoral*, when those nations are taken as a whole, but, estimated in detail, we discover the same result. If we examine those districts where the greatest pretensions to piety exist—where Heaven and Hell form part of every-day parlance—where the “Sabbath” is so rigidly observed that blinds are pulled down and doors closed, as if all the city were at prayers—we behold the average number of breaches of the peace. Where is there a more pious city in the world than Glasgow? Where more immorality?

The *actual* condition of parson-praying, church-attending, Bible-reading, hell-and-devil-dreading England is seen from the following facts. In the discussion between the Rev. Mr. Greg and the Rev. Mr. McQuire in Dublin, it was stated that from Parliamentary returns it appears that in one year *seventy-four thousand cases of bastardy* were brought before the parish authorities. From returns laid upon the table of the House of Commons on the motion of Mr.

Stuart Wortley, we find similar disclosures in relation to the years 1839-41. The Rev. R. Ainslee, in his able sermon on prostitution, states there are no less than 80,000 prostitutes in London alone. Now the population does not exceed two and a half millions, one-half of whom are females. At least one-third of this half, taking the most moderate estimate, are mere children incapable of perpetrating the crime—leaving the net total of 800,000 girls and women. Divide the 800,000 by 80,000, and you arrive at the conclusion that in London, according to the Rev. gentleman's own statement, every *tenth* woman is a prostitute!—This in the very centre of Christian civilization, where the doctrine of a future state is continually before the public! Take another district. In Lancashire and Yorkshire, where psalm-singing, spirit-moving, soul-saving Methodism is most rampant, Sir R. Phillips, in his "Million of Facts," tells us that one child out of every thirteen is illegitimate! The Christian Remembrancer, a pious journal, speaking of the agricultural districts, says that "In an investigation of weights and measures in the small villages of Leigh and Wells, Somersetshire, the number of deficient weights detected amounted to *one hundred and sixty-seven*. In four or five instances the culprits held the double characters of shopkeepers and *sectarian preachers*." The Manchester Guardian for April 28th, 1843, contains the following account of the prisoners confined in the county gaol at Lancaster Castle from January, 1842, to January, 1843:—

Of the Established Church, 471; Roman Catholics, 107; Methodists, 59; Baptists, 9; Presbyterians, 8; Independents, 4; Jews, 3; Calvinists, 2; Primitive Methodists, 1; Unitarians, 1; No denomination, 10; Out of 675 prisoners, 665 were of some religious persuasion! If the reasoning of the theologian was worth anything, the *reverse* should have been the fact. Was the doctrine of futurity "efficacious in *those* cases? Testimony has been borne to the utter inefficiency of

mere *creed* education in preventing delinquency in the remarkable report of the Rev. H. Smith, of Parkhurst. He mentions that out of 154 "general ward boys," 113 *had been Sunday scholars*. The rising generation must be instructed in other things than church collects and catechisms, if sound morality is to flourish amongst us. They must know something more than to be able to repeat, parrot-like, who is their godfather and godmother, how many saint days there are, and where the devil kept Jesus Christ in a mountain, &c., if they are to be of service in their day and generation. They must believe in something else than "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost," if moral restraint is to guide their conduct, and lead them to a noble and useful career. An admirable public teacher, well known to the working classes, has courageously said, when speaking of the religious education of the clergy, "Their theological apparatus, to which *secular* instruction is so largely sacrificed, either does not produce faith at all, or, if it does, that faith does not 'work by love,' or even common honesty. The clergy have had full scope for trying their experiment of generating a virtuous character without the elements of general intelligence and development. *They have most signally and demonstratively failed.* The catechism alone is not the royal road to virtue, nor a short cut to goodness and glory. *The gates that readily open to their pupils are not those of Paradise but Parkhurst.*" Even the Rev. H. Smith himself is obliged to talk of introducing "industrial training" and "secular instruction" as an *improvement* upon their old system of doctrinal tuition. Robert Owen, over fifty years ago, told the clergy of England they would have to come to this at last, and his prophecy, it seems is on the eve of fulfilment.

Contemplate the contrast between a priest-ridden community and one where secular education, free thought, and rational recreations, are secured to the people. Sir Charles Lyell, in his recently published

book on the "Geology of the United States," refers to New Harmony in these terms:—"There is no church or place of worship in New Harmony—a peculiarity we never remarked in any town of half the size in the course of our tour through the United States." Sir Charles adds: "I heard that when the people of Granville once reproached the citizens of that place for having no churches, they observed that they had also no shops for the sale of spirituous liquors, which is still a characteristic of New Harmony; whereas Granville, like most of the neighboring towns of Indiana (where churches *are* seen,) abound in such incentives to intemperance." Establishments for the sale of "spiritual" drinks and "spiritual" *doctrine* are occasionally friendly neighbors. Let the friends of temperance remember these coincidences, and not seek, while laudably exhorting the people to abandon one "spirit" to substitute another, by converting their institutions into mere praying and sighing societies.—Instead of churches and chapels in New Harmony, there could be seen *public halls and museums* in which useful lectures and rational amusement were given to the population. Such institutions *ought* to take the place, and *will* take the place, of religious conventicles throughout the world, despite of every effort to check the rising power of free thought and free discussion. Let science once occupy the ground of superstition, reason that of faith, morality that of piety, liberty that of despotism, and the enlightened and the thinking of mankind will not need celestial "sweetmeats" to *allure*, or infernal tortures to *frighten* them into public integrity and public usefulness.

Why is it, if the belief in a future state is so necessary and *efficacious* in promoting order and security, that its supporters have not more faith in it? Why maintain such a numerous standing army, so extensive a police, so expensive and so complicated an organization of judges, lawyers, attorneys, magistrates, juries, gaolers, and executioners, with their barbarous accom-

paniments of gaols, gallowses, pillories, stocks, whippings, and treadmills? Why is it that property is not considered "secure," without locks, bars, bolts, safes, dogs, spring-guns, and watchmen? Is it not because orthodox people are more afraid of the terrors of the *law* than the terrors of *hell*—a policeman than the devil? The Chinese are quite right. Society is more afraid of a law always *present* than a law to come. It is remarkable that those who insist most upon the efficiency of future rewards and punishments are loudest in their complaints of the prevalence of "sin and iniquity." To listen to their pious rhapsodies, we must believe that all men are "*miserable sinners*." There are none that doeth good, "no, not one." All deserve the "*fearful wrath*" of God—the world being with them nothing but a "*sink of iniquity*," "*a vale of tears*," "*a howling wilderness*." They depict society in such terms, and yet they boast of the "*efficacy*" of the doctrine of a future state in *preventing* such evils! Most amusing, but most lamentable.

It is, indeed, shocking to listen to the manner in which hell, and even heaven, is described, as a means of frightening the children of larger growth who are weak enough to pledge their reason to the clergy of the world. Listen to the following rich specimen of pulpit eloquence and Christian charity and forgiveness. In "*Emen's Sermons*" I read, "*The happiness of the dead in heaven will in part consist in witnessing the torments of the damned in hell*, and among these may be *their own children, parents, husbands, wives, and friends*. Every time they look upon the damned it will excite in them *a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God in making them so to differ*." "*The smoke of their torments will be eternally ascending in the view of the vessels of mercy*, who, instead of taking the part of those miserable objects will say amen, hallelujah, praise the Lord." Edwards, in his "*Practical Sermons*," observes, "*The saints in glory will be far more sensible how dreadful the wrath of God is*,

and will understand how terrible the sufferings of the damned are; *yet this will be no occasion of grief to them, but REJOICING.* They will not be *sorry* for the damned — all sympathy destroyed — it will cause no uneasiness or dissatisfaction to them, but, on the contrary, when they see this sight, it will occasion *rejoicings!* and excite in them *joyful praise.*" I blush to think that so many of my own species can endorse such doctrines.

Confidently do I aver that the "torments of the damned," however horribly portrayed, do not, as a rule, deter men from crime. They only restrain a few timid people who would be harmless without a knowledge of such horrors, but with it are wretched. They from whom society may apprehend *real* danger, are indifferent to such ghostly terrors. The hardened thief, the callous robber, or the deliberate murderer, care not what the devil may think or say about them, provided they can elude the sheriff's officer. They can balance their accounts with the world "to come," when they are about to start for it. There will be more "glory" in their salvation if they only confess their enormities when upon the gallows, than if they had been ordinary, decent people all their lives. They do not forget the very *moral* maxim, that there is more pleasure in the salvation of one sinner than ninety-nine just persons! Two men were hanged at Liverpool a short time ago. When upon the "threshold of eternity," in face of assembled thousands, they declared they felt sure they would go to their "Lord Jesus Christ," having humbly obeyed the injunctions of the chaplain, who told them if they would acknowledge their sins, and pray to God to forgive them, he would, "in his infinite mercy," oblige them. Of course they did so, and the matter was amicably settled between them and their Redeemer. Shall I be seriously told that such doctrines are of moral tendency? Shall I be assured they are conducive to the true reformation of mankind? Do they not rather offer an apology for

crime? Of what moral effect is a system which offers pardon to him who murders his neighbor, on the same condition as to him who commits the slightest offence? Nay, actually bestows the greater honor or "glory" upon the greatest criminal? Such dogmas are not only not essential to virtue, but positively inimical to it. How often do we hear Protestant clergymen declaring that Popery opposes little restraint to crime, since absolution for any offence may be purchased of its priests? What practical difference is there, however, in a moral sense, between *selling* absolution and *promising* absolution? Rest assured this long cherished dogma of a future state has not, and will not, control the really vicious, if other considerations fail, while the truly virtuous need no such checks. The *moral* man esteems excellence not for its value in a world to come, but its practical worth in *this* life. That man can never be purely or permanently virtuous who is *frightened* into it. He must *love* it to be secure. I can never place reliance on the rectitude of one who only walks in the right road because he imagines he sees hell and its torments before him, and hears the devil and his imps behind him. Beelzebub and brimstone might govern for a while, but he would be apt to forget both when a more immediate object powerfully influenced him. Enlightened conviction, and not vulgar fear, is the safeguard of true integrity. Parties who are *only* deterred by the responsibilities of a future state may be *very pious*, but they are not *moral*. They are such as those described by Thomas Hood:—

"Behold yon servitor of God and Mammon,  
Who, binding up his Bible with his ledger,  
Blends gospel texts with trading gammon;  
A black-leg saint—a spiritual hedger—  
Who backs his rigid Sabbath, so to speak,  
Against the wicked remnant of the week,  
A saving bet against his sinful bias.  
"Rogue that I am," he whispers to himself,  
"I lie, I cheat—do anything for pelf  
But who on earth can say I am not *pious*?"

Not only is the doctrine of future rewards and punishments not necessary to maintain morality, but it is *unjust*. It purposed to inflict *eternal* punishment for a momentary error. What crime could we commit so monstrous as to deserve *endless misery*? What parallel can *infinity* bear to the *finite*? What proportion, therefore, can our vices and follies bear to *everlasting* torments? Deeply do I commiserate the moral obliquity of those who would attempt to reconcile this doctrine with the plainest dictates of equity.

It is objectionable, however, in another point of view. It is *inhuman*. It would torture men for the *sake* of torturing them, and not with the rational object of *reformation*. This feeling is unworthy of cultivated humanity. The highest ground upon which punishment is defensible, is upon the plea that it may *improve* the individual. But if no chance of amendment is given, why *eternally* punish him? In what a strange and revolting light this doctrine presents the future destinies of the human family! It is dogmatically pronounced by the Christian priesthood that those who do not believe in Christ are certain of "eternal damnation." Now it has been estimated that there are ten millions Jews, one hundred and seventy millions nominal Christians, one hundred and forty millions Mahomedans, and four hundred and eighty millions Pagans, making in all eight hundred millions, all of whom pass "from time to eternity" in the course of a generation. It follows, therefore, according to this *dictum*, that the Pagans must go to hell at the rate of four hundred and eighty millions, the Mahomedans one hundred and forty millions, Jews ten millions, and nominal Christians say one-half, which is being very liberal — *i. e.*, eighty-five millions, thus awarding to the devil seven hundred and fifteen millions, and God Almighty only eighty-five millions. What a consoling idea! What a doctrine that would condemn such an immense number of human beings to measureless and unremitting torment! Oh! when will the humanity

of the Christian rise above his prejudices and encourage him to abandon such barbarous and inhuman theories? Not long ago, when expatiating upon this enormity, I was told by an avowed opponent of "Infidelity" that I misunderstood Christianity. Those people would *not* be subject to eternal damnation, but that "all would be judged according to the light which was within them." Indeed! This is merely shirking one difficulty to fall into a greater. The peculiar claims of the Christian system are at once nullified by this interpretation. Christ's declaration, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth *not* shall be *damned*," is a sham. If people may go to heaven according to *their own* "light," why be a Christian in order to be "saved"? Why not a Jew, a Mahomedan, an Hindoo? If one is as safe as the other, why take the trouble to convert each other? Why send missionaries to convert the Pagan or the Infidel? Why not stay at home and devote the vast sums thus expended in making *this* world a heaven, by erecting training schools instead of gaols, "home colonies" instead of "penal colonies," workshops instead of poorhouses, halls of *science* instead of halls of *creeds*?

Apart, however, from these considerations, we are most sincerely of opinion that the doctrine of a future state is not only not necessary to incite humanity to virtuous action, but that it is highly INJURIOUS to the best interest of mankind. It has withdrawn the attention of the masses from the *real* causes of the evils of our present existence, and persuaded them to submit to slavery and toil under the vain assurance of happiness "hereafter." Nay, it has even induced them to believe that the more *patiently* and *meekly* they bore their privations the more they would appreciate the "glories" of the world to come! Thus have they kissed the rod that smote them—hugged the chains that enslaved them—nourished the viper that stung them; while priestly and kingly rule re-

mained undisturbed in splendor and power. Believe not that it is priestcraft alone that is benefitted by this theory. *Kingcraft* is equally dependent upon its perpetuity. Legislators have perceived that this imaginary notion could be made a powerful instrument for Government. *They saw it would divert the attention of the multitude from the tangible pleasures yielded by their industry, and now monopolized by the "favored few."* This is the secret of the popularity of this dogma with the "powers that be." They well know, that should the people once understand that the freedom and happiness they can alone enjoy will be on THIS side the grave, they will begin "to take their affairs in their own hands," and awake to *energy, union, and organization*. Oh! then for the downfall of crowns and mitres. *Then* we might truly exclaim with Shelley :—

"Their swords and their sceptres I floating see,  
Like wrecks on the surge of eternity."

Ah! what a scene of life, and vigor, and power, and usefulness, would not this world of ours become, did we all act upon the rational conviction that man's mission pertains to this earth only! How soon would he throw off the manacles of superstition and serfdom, and rise equal to the glorious destiny that awaits him *here!* Though the vulture of despotism may now soar in brutal triumph over Europe, and priests meet in open "convocation" to revive exploded exactions, it only requires the attention of the people to be withdrawn from these "spiritual" delusions, and devoted to the study of the philosophy of human liberty and human happiness, to terminate forever the dismal reign of ignorance, crime, and misery. Emperors, mock and real, may amuse themselves for a day in effacing every emblem of popular liberty, and extirpating even the word freedom from European literature, but the critical hour is ominously impending when they will receive their *last* overthrow.

In coming forward to oppose a doctrine which has entailed such evil upon mankind I have simply done my duty—a duty I never will shrink from, however the tyrannical may threaten or the bigoted may storm. I have a higher opinion of my fellow-creatures than to suppose without the orthodox stimulants of heaven and hell they would sink into beastiality and crime. The main cause of vice and slavery is ignorance; the main cause of ignorance is priestcraft; the main prop of priestcraft is the fallacy of Immortality. Away, then, with the delusion, and the bright stream of virtue and freedom will invigorate and purify the world !

## LECTURE SEVENTH.

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### INSTINCT AND REASON.

FRIENDS—

In concluding our somewhat elaborate, but, I trust, interesting and instructive, argument upon the Immortality of the Soul, I beg to introduce a supplementary chapter. I do not submit it as *necessary* to substantiate our position, but simply as confirming it, by showing the *reductio ad absurdum* to which the reasoning of the theologian infallibly tends.

We propose to grant the theologian, *for the sake of argument*, that all our previous objections are fallacious, and that mind, which he esteems as the soul of man, is really immaterial and immortal. What then? Is the Spiritualist free from all difficulties? Unfortunately his own argument of the mind—intelligence—thought, &c.,—being the soul, proves that the *brute* creation are endowed with Immortality as well as humanity, they also, *in degree*, possessing mental capacity. It is a cardinal doctrine in theology that *man alone* is endowed with this divine attribute.—This is his “*distinguishing characteristic*.” If the theologian’s own ground be tenable, such cannot be true. Theology, as usual, refutes itself. It is singular, though notorious, that divines generally furnish the best refutation of their own doctrines.

The popular assumption that mind constitutes the immortal principle in man leads, we repeat, to a *reductio ad absurdum*; for what absurdity could be more contemptible than that of supposing that dogs,

elephants, horses, monkeys, &c., will live in a future state? What sort of cherubims would *they* make? Most unique, indeed, would be the account *they* would give of themselves “at the great judgment day.” By what standard of faith must *they* be tested? That prince of dreamers, St. John, informs us there was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour, which was considered quite a “God-send,” and, indeed, I should think so, if we are to be continually entertained with the harmony of such associates. They have, however, one advantage over us. We never hear of any *pious* squabbles amongst them—of all disputes the most implacable. How is it we do not discover a Methodistical dog, a Catholic horse, a Calvinistic elephant, or a Puseyite monkey? You may smile, but I hold, if the theologian’s notion of the soul be correct, the idea is not altogether unreasonable, they, also, possessing, *though in a less degree*, what is affirmed to be “the *immortal spark!*”

David Hume has sagaciously observed—“It seems evident that animals, as well as men, learn many things from *experience*, and infer that the same events will follow from the same causes. What is this but the essence of the faculty of causation?” The great historian and philosopher continues—“By this principle they become acquainted with the more obvious properties of external objects, and gradually, from their birth, treasure up a knowledge of the nature of fire, water, earth, stones, heights, depths, &c., and of the effects which result from their operation. The ignorance and inexperience of the young are here plainly distinguishable from the cunning and sagacity of the old, who have learned by long observation to avoid what hurts them, and to pursue what gives ease and pleasure. A horse accustomed to the field will not attempt what exceeds his force or ability. An old greyhound will trust the more fatiguing part of the chase to the younger, and will place himself so as to meet the hare in her doubles: this sagacity is founded

upon *observation* and *experience*." And what is this but an evidence of intelligence? A similar act on the part of *man* would be ascribed to intellect, and why not so in the *brute*? Sir C. Morgan remarks—"That animals *feel* we believe on the *same* evidence which evinces the sensibility of our own species, viz.,—the testimony of external signs. That they have *memory* and *imagination* is abundantly proved, and many of their actions leave but little doubt as to their exercising a *judgment* upon those ideas which are clearly impressed upon their intellects. But if their expressions of feeling, and their actions bear a general resemblance to those of men, *the substance of their cerebral tissue is perfectly alike*." The organs of the several species differing only in *development* and mechanical arrangement. The organs of sense, likewise bear a general analogy in *all* the animal species. The nature of their impressions must, therefore, be generally alike; and the cerebral movements they excite must consequently be similar, since the same tissues uniformly act in the same way on the application of similar stimuli. "All animals," says Elliotson, "will and think, and have a consciousness of personality—the whale and each of the *animalcules*, which are not larger than the three or four-hundredth part of an inch. If a spirit is required for thinking and willing, and for these sense of personality, every one of these microscopic creatures must have a spirit or a soul." Locke, too, admits that all the lower creatures have "a power of conception or thinking." The ancients attributed intelligence, in its purest sense, to many animals, especially the elephant and the horse.—Pliny, the naturalist, after describing the ingenious method of the ants, in pushing with their shoulders the largest bits of grain, says—"There is in them, in very deed, *reason, memory, and care*."

Some theologians nevertheless persist that this is not *mind*. Man alone is endowed with this noble attribute. The lower animals act only from *instinct*.

My friends, this is not true. It is a mere assumption resorted to by the Christian to help him out of a dilemma. *Instinct*, itself, when strictly analyzed, will be found to imply a *mental* operation as well as *reason*, the only difference being that the one indicates a higher development. It is palpable, therefore, if animals *do* act from *instinct* alone, they must still be endowed with an immaterial principle. It is by no means difficult to show that instinct involves a mental operation. It is an established principle in moral philosophy—a principle admitted by theologians themselves, that all pain and pleasure, or, in other words, all *sensation*, lies in the brain, or, as it is ordinarily termed, “*mind*.” I submit, does not an instinctive action imply feeling? Does it not originate in a certain emotion of the animal at the time, and does not the performance of the act impart either pain or pleasure? Animals are endowed with passions or propensities identical with our own—such as attachment, courage, fidelity, anger, cowardice, jealousy, cunning, &c. No one would think of ascribing these emotions in man to anything but an operation of the “*mind*.” Why not so in the brute?

It is not correct, however, that *all* the actions of the animal creation arise from mere *instinct*, any more than it is true that *all* the actions of men originate in *reason*. Man is sometimes impelled by *instinct*, and at others by *reason*. So are other animals. What is an *instinctive* action? It is defined to be an action resulting from neither observation nor experience, but *perfect* from the first as regards the means used and the end to be attained. The act of *sucking* is instinctive, both in the child and the brute. Dr. Davy, in his account of Ceylon, mentions a remarkable instinctive movement on the part of the *alligator*. He saw an egg in the sand just ready to crack, and broke it with his stick. The animal came out and made at once for the *river*! A *fly-catcher* has been seen, on just coming out of its shell, to peck at an insect with

an aim as *perfect* as if it had been engaged all its life in learning the art. These are called *instinctive* actions, because they are perfect from the first, and cannot be improved as the animal advances in years. *Rational* actions, on the other hand, result from *observation and experience*, and are capable of being *improved*.

If, therefore, I can show that the lower species perform actions which obviously result from observation and experience, and are susceptible of improvement as the animal attains further experience, I prove they are endowed with *reason*, in degree, and, therefore, pursuant to the logic of the Spiritualist, must have immaterial and *immortal* souls.

Lord Brougham, in his "Dissertations on Science," narrates some exceedingly remarkable facts of animals of different species exhibiting no ordinary amount of reason and intelligence. In the forests of Tartary and South America, where the wild *horse* is gregarious, there are herds of five or six hundred, which, being ill prepared for fighting, or, indeed, for any resistance, and knowing that their safety is in flight, when they sleep appoint one in rotation who acts as sentinel, while the rest are asleep. If a man approaches, the sentinel walks towards him as if to reconnoitre, or see whether he may be deterred from coming nearer; if the man continues *he neighs aloud in a peculiar tone*, which rouses the herd and all gallop away, the sentinel bringing up the rear. Nothing can be more judicious or *rational* than this arrangement, simple as it is. So a horse belonging to a smuggler at Dover used to be laden with rum spirits and sent on the road unattended to reach its destination. When he observed a soldier, *he would jump off* the highway and hide himself in a ditch, and when discovered *would fight for his load*. The cunning of a dog which Sergeant Wilde (now Lord Truro) tells of, as known to him, is at least equal. He used to be tied up as a precaution against hunting sheep. At night *he slipped his head*

*out of the collar, and, returning before dawn, put on the collar again* in order to conceal his nocturnal excursions. The Sergeant's brother, a highly respectable man, and late Sheriff of London, has a dog *that distinguished Saturday night* from the practice of tying him up for the Sunday, which he dislikes. He will escape on Saturday night and return on Monday morning! Could anything more decidedly evince intelligence, contrivance, or judgment?

Buffon, the great naturalist, mentions that a surgeon of Leeds found a little spaniel who had been lamed. He carried the poor animal home, bandaged up his leg, and after two or three days turned him out. The dog returned to the surgeon's house every morning till the leg was perfectly well. At the end of several months the spaniel again presented himself in company with another dog, who had also been lamed; and he intimated, as well as piteous and intelligent looks could intimate, that he desired the same kind of assistance to be rendered to his friend as had been bestowed upon himself. Did not this action manifestly result from observation and experience?—No one can affirm it was merely an instinctive act. If a person should take a friend whose arm had been fractured to a skilful surgeon who had before cured him, we should infer a course of reasoning like our own—that under similar circumstances similar results would be obtained. *Causation* was clearly implied, which is the highest phase of intellectual capacity. The illustrious naturalist records the case of a *fox*, as amusing as it was extraordinary. A fox, having entered a hen house through a small aperture, which was the only opening, succeeded, without disturbing the family, to destroy all the fowls, and satiating his appetite with part of them, but his voracity so enlarged his dimensions as to prevent his egress. In the morning, the farmer discovered the havoc of the night, and the perpetrator himself sprawled out on the floor of the coop, *apparently* dead from surfeit.

He entered, and taking the fox by the heels, carried him out, and cast him aside behind the house. He had no sooner turned his back than the fox sprang up, and bounded off with the speed of a racer. If this act had been performed by a London thief it would have been pronounced a very clever trick. Of the *beaver*, it has been remarked that a number are employed together at the foot of the tree in gnawing it down, and, when this part of the labor is accomplished, it becomes the business of others to sever the branches, while a third party are engaged along the borders of the river in cutting other trees, which, though smaller than the first, are yet as thick as the leg, if not the thigh, of an ordinary-sized man. These they carry with them by land to the brink of the river, and then by water to the place allotted for their building, where, sharpening them at one end, and forming them into stakes, they fix them in the ground at a small distance from each other, and fill up the vacant spaces with pliant branches. While some are thus employed in fixing the stakes, others go in quest of clay, which they prepare for their purpose with their tails and their feet. At the top of their dyke or mole they form two or three openings, *and these they enlarge or contract as the river rises or falls.* Should the current be very gentle, the dam is carried nearly straight across, but when the stream is swift *it is uniformly made with a curve, having the convex part opposed to the current.* These movements of the beaver display a high degree of ingenuity, skill, and intelligence. Their dams are constructed at the very place a skillful engineer would have selected for a similar purpose. This choice of one spot before another is *necessarily founded on comparison*, which is a deliberate *reasoning* process. The completeness of plan, and combination of means to execute it, which is evidenced in the designs of this singular animal, are wholly inconsistent with the common explanation of instinctive operations. Where we observe an *adap-*

tation of means to ends, *cause and effect*, the highest order of *reason* prevails. And who will deny that this process is evinced in these constructions? The *ant* affords another wonderful instance of intelligence. Their communities are so well known that I need not describe them. They far exceed many of our designs. Great powers of *memory* are displayed, which all know is an *intellectual* faculty. Sir R. Phillips, in his "Million of Facts," gives some curious instances of their rationality, to which I beg to refer you. To prove that the motions of animals frequently result from observation and thought—in a word, that they are susceptible of *education*, I need only remind you of many domestic creatures who can be taught a variety of performances which, if executed by *man*, we should not hesitate to admit to be the consequence of reasoning. M. Leonard, a French gentleman, had two dogs which he had *educated*—I say *educated*—so perfectly, that they could perform the most astonishing feats. They were exhibited in 1843 before the members of the Zoological Society of London. M. Leonard held that they have intelligence, reflection, memory, comparison—all *intellectual* endowments, and his clever dogs clearly, I think, confirm his statement. How the champions of the doctrine under discussion will meet these facts I will not conjecture. The *Atlas* thus reported the curious proceedings:— "M. Leonard's dogs are not merely clever, well-taught animals, which, by dint of practice, can pick up a particular letter, or can, by a sort of instinct, indicate a number which may be asked for; they call into action powers which, if not strictly *intellectual*, approximate very closely to reason. For instance, they exert memory. Four pieces of paper were placed upon the floor, which the company number indiscriminately, 2, 4, 6, 8. The numbers were named but once, and yet the dogs were able to pick up any one of them at command, although they were not placed in regular order. The numbers were then changed, with a simi-

lar result. Again, different objects were placed upon the floor, and when a similar thing—say a glove—was exhibited, one or other of the animals picked it up immediately. The dogs distinguish colors, and, in short, appear to understand everything that is said to them. The dog Braque plays a game of dominoes with any one who likes. We are aware that this has been done before; but when it is considered that it is necessary to distinguish the number of spots, it must be admitted that this requires the exercise of a power little inferior to reason. The dog sits on the chair with the dominoes before him, and when his adversary plays, he scans each of his dominoes with an air of attention and gravity which is perfectly marvellous. When he could not match the domino played, he became restless and shook his head, and gave other indications of his inability to do so. No human being could have paid more attention. The dog seemed to watch the game with deep interest, and what is more, he *won*.

A short time ago the following particulars of a remarkable *horse* went the round of the press, which triumphantly establish the fact that animals are endowed with mind, and if theology is to be depended upon, a *soul* too. Here is a purely intellectual act, *mental calculation*, performed by certainly not the most advanced of the brute species. These experiments were made in the presence of her Majesty and Prince Albert, in the conservatory at Windsor Castle. Amongst the tricks played by the horse at the command of the Queen, one was to spell the word "Albert," by selecting the letters, which were printed on cards, and placed amongst several others on the table before him. Each letter, as he took up the card in his mouth, was placed in the hands of the Queen. The horse next spelt "Victoria," in the same manner, by command of the prince. Such a creature would do greater honor to the immortal attribute than thousands of "rational" beings.

How many adult "Christians," both in our manufacturing and agricultural districts, could spell "Victoria," by "command of the prince"?

Perhaps the most wonderful exhibition on record was performed by a company of dogs, mentioned by Messrs. Chambers in their "Tracts." An aged gentleman has mentioned to us that about fifty years ago, a Frenchman brought to London from eighty to a hundred dogs, chiefly poodles, the remainder spaniels, but all nearly of the same size, and of the smaller kind. On the education of these animals their proprietor had bestowed an immense deal of pains. From puppyhood upwards, they had been taught to walk on their hind legs, and maintain their footing with surprising ease in that unnatural position. They had likewise been drilled into the best possible behavior towards each other; no snarling, barking, or indecorous conduct took place when they were assembled in company. But what was most surprising of all, they were able to perform in various theatrical pieces of the character of pantomimes, representing various transactions in heroic and familiar life, with wonderful fidelity. The object of their proprietor was, of course, to make money by their performances, which the public were accordingly invited to witness in one of the minor theatres. Amongst their histrionic performances was the representation of a siege. On the rising of the curtain, there appeared three ranges of ramparts, one above the other, having salient angles and a moat, like a regularly constructed fortification. In the centre of the fortress arose a tower, on which a flag was flying; while in the distance behind appeared the buildings and steeples of a town. The ramparts were guarded by soldiers in uniform, each armed with a musket or sword, of an appropriate size.

All these were dogs, and their duty was to defend the walls from an attacking party, consisting also of dogs, whose movements now commenced the operations of the siege. In the foreground of the stage were

some rude buildings and irregular surfaces, from among which there issued a reconnoitering party; the chief, habited as an officer of rank, with great circumspection surveyed the fortification; and his sedate movements, and his consultation with the troops that accompanied him, implied that an attack was determined upon. But these consultations did not pass unobserved by the defenders of the garrison. The party was noticed by a sentinel, and fired upon; and this seemed to be the signal to call every man to his post at the embrasures. Shortly after, the troops advanced to the escalade; but to cross the moat, and get at the bottom of the walls, it was necessary to bring up some species of pontoon, and accordingly several soldiers were seen engaged in pushing before them wicker-work scaffoldings, which moved on castors towards the fortifications. The drums beat to arms, and the fearful bustle of warfare opened in earnest. Smoke was poured out in volleys from shot-holes; the besieging forces pushed forward in masses, regardless of the fire; the moat was filled with the crowd; and, amid much confusion and scrambling, scaling-ladders were raised against the walls. Then was the grand tug of war. The leaders of the forlorn-hope who first ascended, were opposed with great gallantry by the defenders; and this was perhaps the most interesting part of the exhibition. The chief of the assailants did wonders; he was seen now here, now there, animating his men, and was twice hurled, with ladder and followers, from the second gradation of ramparts; but he was invulnerable, and seemed to receive an accession of courage on every fresh repulse. The scene became of an exciting nature. The rattle of the miniature cannon, the roll of the drums, the sound of trumpets, and the heroism of the actors on both sides, imparted an idea of reality that for the moment made the spectator forget that he was looking on the performance of dogs. Not a bark was heard in the struggle. After numerous hairbreadth escapes,

the chief surmounted the third line of fortifications, followed by his troops; the enemy's standard was hurled down, and the British flag hoisted in its place; the ramparts were manned by the conquerors, and the smoke cleared away—to the tune of “God save the king.”

Does not this most extraordinary performance undeniably demonstrate that animals are capable of education, and therefore endowed with more than mere instinctive powers? An intellectual faculty of a high order—imitation and memory—was singularly developed in these dumb creatures. Could this be possible if a degree of *intellect* did not exist?

James Hogg, in his “Shepherd's Calendar,” declares that dogs know what is said on subjects in which they feel interested. He mentions the case of a clever sheep dog, named Hector, which had a strange tact in picking up what was said. One day Hogg observed to his mother, “I am going to-morrow to Bowerhope for a fortnight; but I will not take Hector with me, for he is constantly quarrelling with the rest of the dogs.” Hector, which was present, and overheard the conversation, was missing next morning, and when Hogg reached Bowerhope, there was Hector sitting on a knoll, waiting his arrival. He had swam across a flooded river to reach the spot. Still more surprising, the dog may be trained, not only to know the meaning of words, but to *speak* them. The learned Leibnitz reported to the French Academy that he had seen a dog in Germany that had been taught to pronounce certain words. The teacher of the animal, he stated, was a Saxon peasant boy, who, having observed in the dog's voice an indistinct resemblance to various sounds of the human voice, was prompted to endeavor to make him speak. The animal was three years old at the beginning of his instructions—a circumstance which must have been unfavorable to the object; yet, by dint of great labor and perseverance, in three years

the boy had taught it to pronounce thirty German words. It used to astonish its visitors by calling for tea, coffee, chocolate, &c.

Can anything more strongly indicate *reason, judgment, perception, causality*, and all the higher capabilities of mind? Where will the spiritualist draw the line of demarcation between the "*reason*" of men and the "*instinct*" of the brute in this case? If "*mere matter*" in the animal can perform such mental functions, why not in man? If a "*spirit*" is needed in one case, why not in both? I read, some time ago, of a *dog* which had such a strict sense of time—an intellectual function—as to count the days of the week. It trudged two miles every Saturday to market, to cater for himself in the shambles. I read of another which had belonged to an Irishman, and was sold by him in England, which would never touch a morsel of food *on a Friday*. The Irishman had made him as good a Catholic as himself. That dog *deserved* a soul, surely.

In the *Knickerbocker* magazine there is a strange story of a *bird*. She had built her nest by a stone quarry, and during incubation was frequently alarmed by the blasting. She soon learned that the ringing of a bell preceded an explosion, and, like the laborers, at this signal *she retreated to a place of security*. This fact having been discovered, some spectators succeeded in alarming her several times by false reports. The imposition was soon detected, and she did not afterwards fly at the sound of the bell, *unless the workmen also retired*. Does not this fact prove observation upon the part of the bird, and that her actions in this instance were founded on the same experience as our own? The *elephant*, if he has been ensnared and escapes, is afterwards very cautious while in the woods, and, breaking a large branch from a tree with his trunk, *he sounds the ground before he treads upon it*, to discover if there are any more pits upon his passage. He

exhibits the same kind of deliberation while passing a bridge. Is not this an evidence that *elephants* learn by *experience*? The celebrated traveller, Humboldt, speaks of another class of animals, the *South American mules*. When the mules find themselves in danger, they stop, turning their heads to the right and to the left; the motion of their ears seems to indicate that they *reflect* on the decision they ought to take. Their resolution is slow, but *always* just, if it be free—that is to say, if it be not crossed nor hastened by the impatience of the traveller. It is on the frightful roads of the Andes, during journeys of six or seven months, across mountains, surrounded by torrents, that the *intelligence* of horses and beasts of burden displays itself in an astonishing manner. Thus the mountaineers are heard to say, “I will not give you the mule whose step is the easiest, but him who *reasons* best.” Fairly might it be said, if the intellectual phenomena of man require an immaterial principle super-added to the brain, we must equally concede it to those more rational animals, which exhibit manifestations differing from some of the human only in degree. If we grant it to these, we cannot refuse it to *the next* in order, and so on in succession to the whole series, down to the polypus and the microscopic animalcules. Is any one prepared to admit the existence of immaterial principles in all these cases? If not, he must equally reject it in man.

As a further illustration that animals can accommodate themselves to *circumstances*, and therefore must exercise reason, *bees* increase the depth and number of their cells as occasion requires. A *wasp* removing a dead companion from the nest, if he finds it too heavy, cuts off the head, and carries out the load in two portions. In countries infested with monkeys, *birds* which in other districts build in bushes or clefts, suspend their nests at the end of tender twigs. The *nymphæ* of water moths, which cover themselves with cases of straw, gravel, or shells, contrive to make their

cases *in equilibrium with the water*. When too heavy, they add a bit of wood or straw; when too light, a bit of gravel. Does not this show *contrivance*, which is an element of intelligence—reason? Dr. Whately, the present Archbishop of Dublin, in a lecture he delivered some time ago on “Instinct,” before the members of the Natural History Society of Dublin, expresses opinions strongly supporting these which I have propounded to you. Dr. Whately is the most eminent metaphysician of the day, and author of the best work on logic in any language. What says he? In this lecture he labors to show that as man possessed instinct in a lower degree than the brutes, so, in a lower degree than man, brutes—at least the higher class—possessed *reason*. He further remarks that “several things which were allowed by every one to be acts of reason when done by man, *were done by brutes, manifestly under a similar impulse.*” He mentions the case of a cat who learned to ring the bell whenever it wanted to go out of the parlor. The first time it performed this trick was in the night, when all the inmates of the house, thinking it was a robber, came running down stairs armed with pokers, tongs, and other pleasant evidences of good intentions. The archbishop himself says of this anecdote, “It is quite clear, if such acts were done by *man* they would be regarded as the exercise of reason. These *were called* acts of reason when done by man, *and he did not know why they should not be called the same when performed by brutes.*” Bravo, archbishop! Thanks for your candor. I wonder if his Grace thought of the dilemma in which he was placed by this admission—that if *man* has an immortal soul, *because* he is endowed with reason, mind, &c., the *cat* must have one too. What a pretty couple he and his cat would make in the *angelic* regions!

Many animals are endowed with *forethought*, which is eminently an intellectual emanation. This is seen in their providing magazines, on which to subsist

during winter. It is the result of a long process of *reasoning*, of which the impossibility of obtaining supplies during such periods, the *amount* necessary, the *manner* of bestowing it, and the *kind* of provision which is not perishable, may be the most obvious. To satisfy *present* hunger, a simple *instinctive* impulse might be sufficient, but to *anticipate distant wants*, the exercise of an *intelligent* principle is clearly requisite. The ant, the bee, the squirrel, the beaver, &c., are distinguished instances of this *foresight*.

The famous argument of Dr. Paley to prove intelligence in Deity is, that the universe exhibits marks of contrivance—contrivance proves design, and design intelligence. Now if contrivance proves design, and design intelligence, I hold that the nests of birds, the cells of the bee, the spider's web, the mound of the ant, the dam of the beaver, and the hills of the termites, exhibit marks of contrivance, contrivance design, and, *therefore*, intelligence.

Some divines, seeing the absurdities and inconsistencies in which they are involved, by affirming that mind, or intelligence, is the *soul*, have endeavored to qualify it by stating that man is immortal not exactly in consequence of his being endowed with intelligence, but because he possesses *superior* intelligence. Now this is a distinction equally fatal to their arguments. If man possesses an immortal principle because he is endowed with *higher* intelligence than the next below him, the chimpanzee, by the same parity of reasoning, must have an immortal principle, because his intelligence is superior to the next in order, and so on down to the zoophyte. Why, in jumping from the sagacious monkey to man, are we to have recourse to the stimulus of an *essence* for explaining the superior cerebration he manifests? Why not give a portion of this, or some similar *essence*, to the monkey, because his cerebration is superior to the sheep or goat? Nay, why not allow a minute portion of some more imperishable essence to the fish, which obeys the call of its feeder, and swims

to the required spot for its daily nourishment? If this be ridiculous—if no addition be required to account for the improved cerebration of inferior beings, why, without the slightest evidence, are we to suppose that a higher order of cerebration in man cannot be manifested without such addition? Of that remarkable animal, the *ourang-outang*, Buffon relates that he had seen one of these creatures offer his hand to those who came to see him, and walk with them as if he had been one of the company; that he had seen him sit at table, unfold his napkin, wipe his lips, make use of the knife and fork, pour out his drink in a glass, take a cup and saucer, put in sugar, pour out the tea, and stir it in order to let it cool; and that he had done this, *not at the command of his master, but often without bidding!* I again ask for the test by which the spiritualist presumes to decide that such actions in the brute are mere “instinct,” while in ourselves they are the result of “reason”?

Sir C. Morgan, indeed, maintains that *reason* is nothing but a more highly developed and complex instinct. “In applying the term instinct,” says he, “to any act, we express but the simple fact that it depends immediately upon the play of the organization, and the most complicated instance of reason and volition is no more. Every simple judgment we form is an *instinctive* act, dependent upon the law of our perception, which enables us to decompose our complex ideas, and every volition is an instinctive movement, arising from a fundamental law in the economy, connecting the desire of an object with the muscular movement which is to procure it. We will, and the muscles obey; we are affected, and a movement ensues.” “Our reasonings and volitions, therefore,” he concludes, “are merely more complicated cases of instinct, and the division established between these classes of phenomena is purely arbitrary and unfounded in real difference.” If Sir Charles be right, the whole fabric of the spiritualists is summarily demolished.

I have devoted so much of our time to this argument, because I esteem it of importance. If the position I have taken on this occasion be sound—if it be a fact that other animals possess intelligence, mind, &c., and these prove the existence of an immaterial and immortal principle, *they* also are designed to live in “another and a better world.” The gross absurdity and inconsistency of the admired doctrine of immortality thus becomes manifest. Even the clergy must smile at the conclusion which their own premises logically and inevitably establish.

Why is it that facts like these should have been so long disregarded as to induce the belief that all such actions flow from a principle entirely different to our own? *Why?* *Because the priesthood of the world are arrayed against knowledge and science.* They are interested in the perpetuity of dogmas directly opposed to the evidence those facts present. It would not be conformable to the “interest of the church” to admit that the lower animals are endowed with “mind,” and consequently immortality. The absurdities it would involve would bring their favorite theory into ridicule and contempt. Such an admission, too, would immeasurably augment their labors with little prospect, I apprehend, of proportionate compensation, for no other animal but man would pay a priest for deceiving him. Hence the theological teacher has notoriously prostituted every science, perverted every fact, tortured every evidence which tends to explode a dogma which constitutes the foundation of the antiquated fabric of superstition and fanaticism.

Possibly in these discourses I may have employed, when speaking of the clerical profession, strong expressions of reproach and denunciation. Let it be understood that on all such occasions I spoke of them as an *organization* rather than as individuals, as a *system* rather than as *men*. There are honorable exceptions, I am proud to admit; but as a *class*, willingly or unwillingly on their part, they are the

stumbling-block in the way of every effort to enlighten and emancipate mankind. Talk of *social* reform, and they exclaim that poverty is a *divine* ordinance; that God made both *poor* and rich, and the people must, therefore, "be content in the situation in which Divine Providence has placed them." Talk of *political* reform, and they remind you that it is our duty, by command of the inspired word of heaven, to submit "to the powers that be." Talk of *educational* progress, and they exclaim that all education without religion, which simply means without *them*, "would be a curse rather than a blessing." Talk of *moral* reform in the shape of the temperance or any other kindred movement, and they caution us, to quote the words of the Rev. Mr. Duncan, of North Shields, that "it is an attempt to take the regeneration of man out of God's hands." Talk of *peace* reform, and we behold the mitred priest blessing the fatal emblem of human slaughter. Talk of reform in the blackest, the vilest, the meanest of all moral abuses, the selling of human flesh, the trading in human slavery, and the man of God points his finger to the infallible page, sanctioning the crime! Oh! if the humble efforts I have made in these lectures, have only contributed to check, however feebly, this monstrous power — to snap one link in the chain of human oppression, to shed one beam of light upon human ignorance, to force one step in advance the glorious car of progress, I can at least leave the world "better for having lived in it."

THE END.



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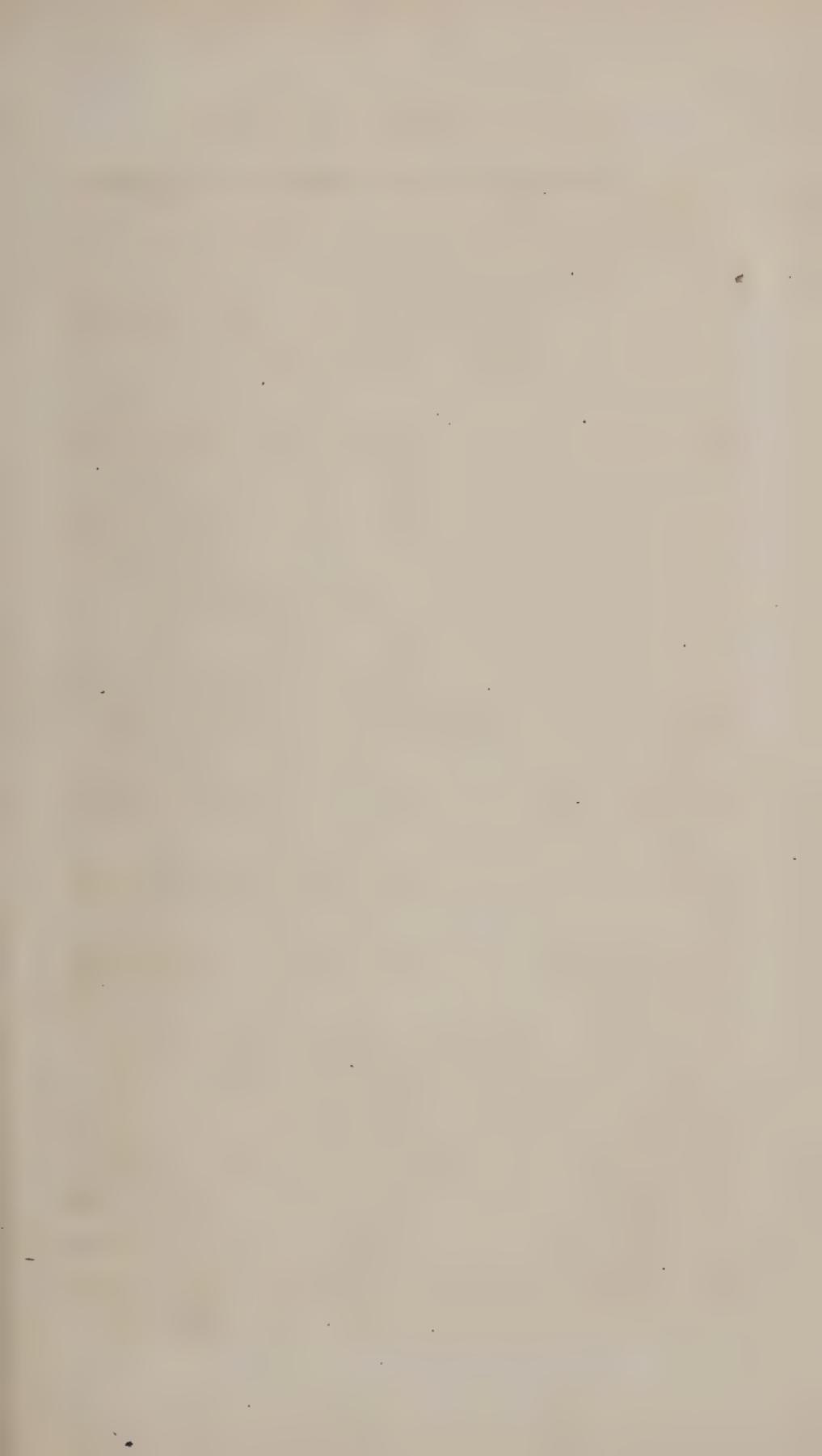
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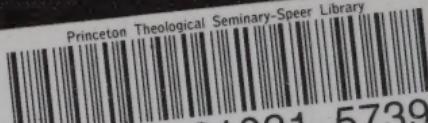


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